

Why isn't
Noriega
gone yet?

PAGE 2

IN THESE TIMES

VOL. 12, NO. 21

APRIL 20-26, 1988

\$1.25

Run, women, run!
Eleanor Smeal's new campaign

PAGE 6

Gumshoe documentaries
Truth is stranger

PAGES 20-21

A wall, a war and a wasteland

The fight for
the Western Sahara

PAGE 12

Morocco

Algeria

Mauritania

Mali

Atlantic Ocean

The Wall

Western Sahara



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Panama's Noriega has geography, history on his side

By Merrill Collett

What keeps Gen. Manuel Noriega in power in Panama? It's a vexing question for the Reagan administration. All of their huffing and puffing can't seem to blow Noriega out of the barracks. Why don't Panamanians rise up against their drug-dealing dictator? Some have, of course. The middle and upper classes are in revolt. But their demonstrations have failed to turn out the masses. "Pineapple Face," as Noriega is known in Panama, stays in power. Panama's geography and history helps tell us why.

Real estate agents say there are three things to consider when buying a piece of property: location, location, location. By those criteria, Panama is a prime piece of property. For nearly 500 years Panama has been sitting on the crossroads of the world's great nations.

Rolling with the punches: Imperial Spain was the first on the scene. In 1513 Vasco Nunez de Balboa and 190 well-armed Spaniards trekked across the isthmus in search of new worlds to plunder. The inter-ocean land route they discovered linked the kings of Castille with the gold-producing colonies in South America. Panama's fate was sealed as the pathway between the seas.

Panamanians adapted to their destiny. Centuries of living in a trade route owned by the empires made them pragmatic survivors. Colonized by conquistadors, pillaged by pirates and occupied by the U.S. military, they rolled with the punches. Panamanians learned how to bargain,

not battle. They became very good bargainers indeed. The late Gen. Omar Torrijos is considered the best of them all. There have been many generals in Panama's history, but Torrijos is the only one still called "The General." While still a colonel in the National Guard, Torrijos booted out recently elected President Arnulfo Arias in 1968. Washington had no regrets. Arias was a right-wing populist who hated the gringos. He supported Hitler and Mussolini in World War II. After Arias was elected for the first time in 1940, U.S. Canal Zone authorities helped depose him. He returned to power by capitalizing on a wave of anti-American feeling. Washington was not sorry to see him go.

Torrijos, on the other hand, had positive potential in American eyes. A graduate of the U.S. Army's School of the Americas, Torrijos was determined to build up U.S. confidence in his regime. He locked up radical leftists and reached out to U.S. banks and multinational corporations. But this soon proved to be the fake to the right that allowed Torrijos to make an end run around the left.

Although he was part of the wave of military rulers who overthrew Latin American democracies in the '60s and '70s, Torrijos was not a neo-fascist like Pinochet in Chile or Galtieri in Argentina, men who saw communist subversion as the enemy. Torrijos believed social injustice was the source of subversion. "The true enemies of our people are hunger, misery and ignorance," said the billboards that were signed simply "Omar." Torrijos attacked those targets. He vastly expanded social spending, increased the influence of labor unions, pushed through agrarian reform and committed the military to improving conditions in the long-neglected countryside. To do this, he rewrote the constitution. He elevated the National Guard to a fourth branch of government and required that all government agencies act in "harmonic collaboration" with the armed forces. This was *torrijismo*.

Six years after the death of Torrijos, *torrijismo* has become military rule devoid of reformist goals. A self-financed military caste rules from barely behind the scenes, accumulating fine cars and fancy houses and passing final judgment on who should be Panama's president. As always, the leadership of one man has a fatal flaw: changing the man changes the leadership. Instead of The General, Panama has Pineapple Face.

"A dirty country": Many strata of Panamanian society want to get rid of Noriega. Students clamor for a full-fledged democracy, unrestricted by military veto. Trade union leaders, formerly pillars of support for Torrijos, are angry that the Noriega regime has gutted much of the labor law pushed through by The General. Poor and working people have little enthusiasm for a regime that lets them suffer chronic unemployment and all the ills that go with it.

All Panamanians wince with shame to think their country has become an ally of Colombia's cocaine cartel. "This is a dirty country," a sad-eyed woman told a television reporter in Panama City.

Why can't Washington tap into this enormous reservoir of anti-Noriega sentiment? Of course Washington's leadership is undermined by its years as a partner in Noriega's crimes (see *In These Times*, Feb. 24). But there are more fundamental reasons why so many Panamanians stay neutral in the war on Noriega. Once again, history and geography offer an insight.

Panamanians are not prone to political violence, but there was one issue that pushed national pride to the

SIDE STORY

boiling point: the Canal Zone. Imagine that the U.S. was split in two by a 10-mile-wide swath cut across its center and controlled by a foreign power. That was the Canal Zone. It was a place where policemen did not speak Spanish and U.S. judges could sentence Panamanians to U.S. prisons. "Panama—the country with a fifth frontier," was the way anti-Canal Zone protesters put it. In 1964 21 Panamanian protesters were shot dead by U.S. Canal Zone troops. Four years later Torrijos came to power determined to get back the Canal Zone.

Generations of Panama City politicians had given lip service to extending national sovereignty into the Canal Zone, but their real concern was keeping their lucrative Canal Zone contracts. Construction of the canal had created an enormous market for businessmen to supply. The volume of goods and services sold to the zone regularly exceeded Panamanian exports abroad. Out of this trade arose a parasitic commercial ruling class dependent on a foreign enclave for survival.

Torrijos used his coup to depose the commercial elite from power and put in their place young National Guard officers. Now the old elite see a chance to get back into power. This is the political agenda the Civic Crusade keeps hidden as it waves its white handkerchiefs for democracy. They didn't wave those white handkerchiefs for Torrijos. It was poor and working Panamanians who filled the 5th of May Plaza to hear The General demand that Uncle Sam return the Canal Zone to Panamanians. Torrijos gave them reason to be proud.

Noriega, with his "Dignity Brigades," is cynically exploiting that pride. But pride is all many poor Panamanians have. And is it so far-fetched to think that Reagan seeks more than democracy in Panama? After all, he once said the Canal Zone was as much a part of the U.S. as Texas. And, as if written into the script by Noriega himself, Reagan has now sent in the Marines. Caught between Pineapple Face and Rambo, what real choice do Panamanians have?

Merrill Collett writes regularly on Latin American issues.

CONTENTS

Inside Story: Between 'Pineapple Face' and 'Rambo' in Panama	2
Behind the riots in Honduras	3
In Short	4
Eleanor Smeal's Feminization of Power campaign	6
Democrats' high hopes for congressional elections	7
Home health care workers turn to the unions	8
India—after the Green Revolution	9
West Bank—the right wing in the wrong place	11
France—shockwaves from an anti-apartheid activist's murder	11
Western Sahara—a wall, a war and a wasteland	12
Editorial	14
Viewpoint: Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy re-examined	15
Sylvia	15
Viewpoint: Time magazine's Jackson stereotyping	16
Viewpoint: Do socialists have any idea what socialism is?	17
In Print: Professing Literature	18
Working class as reading class	19
Putting the pastoral out to pasture	19
In the Arts: Errol Morris on the scene of the crime	20
The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On	21
Classifieds/Life in Hell	23
Musicians Casselberry and Dupree mix it up	24

(ISSN 0160-5992)

Published 41 times a year: weekly except the first week of January, first week of March, last week of November, last week of December; bi-weekly in June through the first week in September by Institute for Public Affairs, 1300 W. Belmont, Chicago, IL 60657, (312) 472-5700. The entire contents of *In These Times* are copyright © 1988 by Institute for Public Affairs, and may not be reproduced in any manner, either in whole or in part, without permission of the publisher. Second-class postage paid at Chicago, IL, and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *In These Times*, 1912 Debs Ave., Mt. Morris, IL 61054. This issue (Vol. 12, No. 21) published April 20, 1988, for newsstand sales April 20-26, 1988.

By Medea Benjamin

IN AN IRONY OF HONDURAN HISTORY, IT TOOK THE U.S. government's illegal extradition of Honduran drug king Juan Ramon Matta Ballesteros to spark the anti-American sentiment that has been brewing for years. The Reagan administration, which has regularly denied that such opposition existed, was taken aback by the sight of Hondurans burning the American flag and throwing Molotov cocktails at the U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa.

The 2,000 demonstrators who gathered outside the embassy on April 7 set fire to some 25 vehicles and burned the embassy annex, which houses the offices of the U.S. Consulate, the Agency for International Development (AID) and the U.S. Information Service. Damage was estimated at between \$4 million and \$6 million.

The Honduran government reported that four students were killed in the protests, but eyewitnesses have confirmed only two deaths. U.S. Embassy spokesman Michael O'Brien denied charges that U.S. Marines or Honduran security guards employed by the embassy fired on the demonstrators. But witnesses confirmed that shots were fired from inside the embassy compound. As *In These Times* went to press the Honduran government had issued no statement on who was responsible for the killings.

What distinguishes the April 7 demonstration from past protests is the level of violence. Another significant difference is that the protest was not called by the left student groups, but by the FUUD (United Democratic University Front), a conservative student group. The FUUD is allied with the National University's right-wing rector, Osvaldo Ramos Soto, who in turn has close ties to the Honduran military. In an unprecedented unity of left and right student groups, the FUUD was joined in the protest by the university's left-leaning MAT (Broad Transformation Movement) and the leftist students at the National Teachers' School.

Not drug-crazed: Both the U.S. and Honduran governments have tried to label the embassy demonstrators as drug sympathizers. State Department spokeswoman Ellen Bork complained, "We think it is terrible that Hondurans would show their support for a notorious drug dealer by attacking a U.S. government building."

It's true that Matta is a popular figure in Honduras. He is seen as a kind of folk hero for his dramatic escapes from jail and for the way he has thumbed his nose at U.S. authorities. He is also well-liked because he spread his money around. His construction, dairy and tobacco businesses employ some 4,000-5,000 people in a country where half the population is unemployed.

Matta also has given a lot of money away. Poor Hondurans, for instance, would line up at his home every day asking for money or jobs. School principals or clinic directors, getting no response from the government, would go to Matta for help with scarce supplies.

But the protest was not pro-Matta. "The outburst has little to do with Matta and nothing to do with drugs," said a demonstrator who requested anonymity. "It is a question of principle. Matta's abduction was a flagrant violation of the [Honduran] constitution, which prohibits extradition. If they could do



Honduran protesters burn the U.S. flag they captured from inside the U.S. Embassy on April 7.

Anti-American sentiments explode in Honduras

this to Matta, they could do the same to any of us. Second, if Matta is guilty of drug dealing, which most people believe he is, then let him be accused and tried in Honduras. We're tired of the U.S. violating our sovereignty."

Joe Eldridge, a Methodist minister living in Honduras and former director of the Washington Office on Latin America, underscored this point. "The reason behind the outburst was not Matta, but a U.S. policy that has turned Honduras into the center of U.S. military operations in the region. The U.S. deployment of 3,000 troops to Honduras last month only added fuel to the fire. Anyone who tries to deny that is far astray."

As the demonstrations continued on April 8, government response was swift and severe. Honduran officials declared a state of emergency, suspending key civil liberties in the capital and the second largest city, San Pedro Sula. The decree banned street demonstrations, and gave the police and security forces broad powers to search premises, make arrests and hold people incommunicado without charges. By April 10, three days before the emergency was lifted, more than 50 people had been arrested.

Details on the arrests and killings remain sketchy due to the government-imposed media blackout. In a display of press censorship not witnessed since the 1969 war with El Salvador, the nation's 140 radio stations were forced into a nationwide hookup run from the president's press office following the crisis. The press office played innocuous music interspersed with communiques claiming the violence was instigated by drug traffickers and terrorists. TV news programs were also suspended. By April 9 press restrictions were lifted, but new reporting continues to be extremely limited.

The government crackdown sent a shockwave through the Honduran opposition.

"We're afraid that the government will use the embassy disturbances as a pretext for repressing all progressive organizations," said peasant leader Teofilo Trejos.

Such fears were intensified on April 9, when men in civilian dress fired into the offices of the independent Human Rights Commission (CODEH). No one was hurt, but the commission's director, Dr. Ramon Custodio, has long been targeted by the right for his stinging denunciations of human rights abuses. The commission's regional director in San Pedro Sula, Miguel Angel Pavon, was assassinated on January 14.

Lingering questions: The demonstration leaves many questions unanswered. Why did the right-wing student group—whose mentor has close military ties—lead the demonstration? And who initiated the violence, since Honduran demonstrations have traditionally been peaceful?

Also, why did it take the Honduran government more than two hours to respond to U.S. Embassy requests for assistance? There is speculation that the reason for the delay was a heated debate within the military about their role in Matta's seizure. It appears that the decision to extradite Matta was not made by the military's usual decision-making body, the Superior Council (COSUFFAA), and certain officers not informed about the decision beforehand were infuriated.

Finally, why did the army agree to extradite Matta in the first place? What was it getting in return? A possible answer was reported on Radio America, one of Honduras' leading radio stations. A Honduran official told a journalist at Radio America that he had seen a memorandum from U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Elliott Abrams to President Jose Azcona saying that if the Hondurans agreed to hand over Matta, the U.S. would not press charges against five Honduran col-

onels implicated in drug deals and would release AID funds that had been held up.

Radio America later named the Honduran colonels, and they were, not surprisingly, the "biggies": the minister of defense, the head of military intelligence, the head of the joint chiefs of staff, the commander of the navy and the Honduran representative to the Inter-American Defense Board in Washington.

Honduran army officials were enraged by the report, and immediately summoned the director and reporter of Radio America for questioning. They tried to force the reporter to reveal his source, but he refused. Yet officials have not issued any public statement denying the report's validity.

An unheralded return: Caught up in the embassy brouhaha, the U.S. media failed to highlight another major Honduran development this month: the return to Honduras from Miami of the exiled former chief of the armed forces, Gustavo Alvarez Martinez. Alvarez, who was trained in the wiles of political repression by the Argentine military, became army chief in 1982 with Pentagon approval. During his reign of terror from 1982-84, he instituted the torture and death squads that continue to function today. Progressive forces in Honduras view the return of Alvarez with great dismay.

"One possibility is that Alvarez' return is meant as a distraction to focus the opposition's outrage on him instead of on the real centers of power," said Eric Shultz, of the Boston-based Honduras Information Center. "Another theory is that a serious crisis has developed in U.S.-Honduran military relations and the U.S. hopes Alvarez—who has been on contract to the Rand Corporation and the Pentagon—can play a role in ensuring that the pro-U.S. forces in the Honduran military come out on top."

Until now, the movement opposing the U.S. militarization of Honduras has not been able to significantly broaden its base. The Reagan administration's handling of the Matta case has accomplished what the opposition had been unable to do: tap the well-spring of discontent. "There has been a fundamental shift, a watershed in Honduran politics," said Eldridge. "The U.S., if it is smart, will pander a bit more to Honduran pride and hope the whole thing will blow over. It certainly could, but I doubt it."

The protests have already sparked the formation of the "April 7th Student Alliance," a coalition of students from the high schools, the National University and the National Teachers' College. Its declared goal is to defend Honduras' constitution and national sovereignty, and it has urged all students to be on alert for renewed calls for demonstrations. Another new group is the "Francisco Morazan Patriotic Front for the Defense of National Sovereignty" (named after Honduras' founding father), which aims to unite these students with worker and peasant groups.

But it's an open question whether the opposition will be able to galvanize this surge of discontent and mold it into a movement strong enough to reclaim Honduran sovereignty. □

Medea Benjamin is a senior analyst at the San Francisco-based Institute for Food and Development Policy/Food First, and author of *Don't Be Afraid, Gringo: A Honduran Woman Speaks from the Heart*.

IN SHORT

By Joel Bleifuss

Meltdowns have no season

The pro-nuclear U.S. Council for Energy Awareness (CEA), an industry coalition, is planning to spend \$8.3 million to \$10.3 million—eight to 10 times *In These Times'* annual budget—to "emphasize good news about nuclear energy." The group's "1988 Recommended Media Plan," which was leaked to the San Francisco-based Earth Island Institute, calls for, among other promotions, 24 quarter-page ads in the *Wall Street Journal*. This space will be used to continue CEA's successful column, "Energy Updates." (A *Journal* survey has found that 29 percent of its readers remembered seeing "Energy Updates" and 26 percent found this nuclear information relevant to their jobs.) The CEA's media campaign will also help finance the General Electric/NBC broadcast of the World Series. (GE/NBC is the only CEA member that makes both nuclear reactors and network newscasts.) According to the CEA, these television ads will both "legitimize" [sic] the energy issue and supplement magazines' factual communications with a more emotional message. As CEA pollster Eugene Pokorny told *Nucleonics Week*, these emotional messages will inspire "a grudging acceptance of nuclear power...create a sense of inevitability...building from a perceived need argument with safety considerations being secondary." A constant barrage of propaganda is needed, says the CEA, because public opinion is susceptible to a "wide variety of unpredictable current events which can occur at any time during the year."

Draining America first

"This candy-coated advertising campaign is a vain attempt to artificially resuscitate a dying industry," says Scott Denman, director of the anti-nuclear Safe Energy Communication Council. Here are some facts. Every nuclear reactor ordered in the U.S. since 1973 has been cancelled. No reactors have been ordered since 1978. Nuclear power provides 4.4 percent of the nation's energy needs at the cost of billions of dollars. On the other hand, Arthur Rosenfeld of the University of California's Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory reports that conservation and energy efficiency improvements made in the U.S. since 1973 save approximately \$150 billion a year. But the country's annual energy bill is still around \$440 billion. Rosenfeld says that if the U.S. followed the lead of Japan and invested in conservation and energy efficiency, another \$220 billion a year could be saved.

AIDS in the USSR

Four people in the Soviet Union have come down with AIDS: three Africans, now dead, and one Soviet, a gay man who picked up the disease in Tanzania. Sylvie Kauffman writes in *Le Monde* of Paris that health officials further report that 262 people in the country have tested positive for AIDS antibodies, 33 of whom are Soviet citizens. Last August, the Soviet Union decreed that all members of high-risk groups would be tested. This new testing policy affects foreign students and three Soviet criminal classes: prostitutes, drug addicts and homosexuals. State police have turned over the relevant files to local health authorities who are busy tracking down these "criminals."

No condoms, please

The Soviet Union relies on an AIDS defense program that stresses behavior modification and ignores condoms. Valentin Pokrovski, president of the Academy of Soviet Medicine, explains that condoms present three problems. First, they would impede a "major campaign...to encourage a higher birth rate in the European part of the Soviet Union." Second, there is a shortage of condoms because "Soviet industry has always given priority to oral female contraceptives and IUDs." Third, Pokrovski says he and other public health officials fear that condoms would negatively "influence the moral grounding of our fellow citizens."

The land of the free market

The drug most often used to treat pneumocystis carinii pneumonia—a deadly AIDS-related lung infection—is Pentamidine. Consequently, LyphoMed Inc. of Chicago has done well with its exclusive patent on the injectable form of this drug. Freelance writer Rex Wockner reports that the company has upped the price of one dose of Pentamidine by 400 percent—from \$24.95 in 1984 to \$99.45 today. A spokesman for Chicago for AIDS



A member of the Philadelphia Chile Committee was on hand to protest when Chile opened its Philadelphia consulate this February. Chile imports \$800 million worth of fruit through Philadelphia's ports.

Philadelphia: U.S. port of call for Pinochet's fruit

Officials of Philadelphia's founding ports have finally got hold of an economic lifesaver, and despite protests from human rights groups and California grape growers, they will not let go.

That lifesaver is Chilean fruit. And at a recent House subcommittee hearing on the future of the ports, Pennsylvania's two U.S. senators and state legislators did their best to fend off criticism. As Pennsylvania state Sen. Vincent J. Fumo blustered, Chileans and his constituents are "natural allies."

Port officials contend that years of waterfront mismanagement and political bumbling have reached crisis proportions. U.S. Customs statistics show that over the last five years, cargo shipments at Philadelphia's ports have fallen 24 percent. In the last two years four shipping companies, citing lack of warehouse space, cargo slip-ups and dilapidated piers, have abandoned Philadelphia for terminals in Norfolk, Va., and Baltimore.

Enter Chilean grapes, whose import has become more and more vital as the port declines. Philadelphia is now the principal U.S. receiver of Chile's table grapes, apples, peaches and melons. This winter the port unloaded 30 million cases of fruit valued at \$800 million—80 percent of Chile's \$1 billion

fruit-export business. The fruit accounts for one-fourth of all waterfront labor.

But activists behind a two-year-old nationwide boycott of Chilean fruit are attacking the Chile-Philly fruit connection. They claim that since fruit is one of Chile's largest exports, Philadelphia indirectly props up Gen. Augusto Pinochet's regime by allowing him to service the country's \$20 billion foreign debt—the highest per capita of any country in the world.

Chile's fruit industry has thrived on repression of workers and unions. The country's labor code bars trade unionists from organizing, and prohibits collective bargaining beyond a single work site. The U.S. Congress has consequently revoked Chile's nearly \$30 million in Overseas Private Investment Corporation guarantees. And even the Reagan administration, forced to acknowledge the dictator's violations of workers' rights, suspended Chile's duty-free trading status early this year.

Boycott members accuse city authorities of cutting sweetheart deals with a dictator. The same week that Reagan imposed tariffs on Chile, Philadelphia celebrated the opening of a Chilean consulate. "Our offices are intended to improve trade relations and friendship with the U.S., as well as serving our other interests," said Consul Christian Hohlberg. Despite the port authority's debt, the consulate persuaded the port authority

to spend an extra \$38,000 to fund trade missions from Philadelphia to Chile.

One result of those trips is that Chilean companies have agreed to lease piers 82 and 84—dubbed "Pinochet's Piers"—from the city. This is the first time that Philadelphia has given foreign companies exclusive rights to public property.

But the Chile-Philly connection is not just a north-south issue. An east-west conflict between Philadelphia officials and California grape growers has broken out. Last spring the California growers undercut their Chilean competition by persuading the Department of Agriculture to shut off Chilean grape imports to Philadelphia on April 20 each year. A trade bill now pending in Congress would end the grape imports even earlier.

State Sen. Fumo, the Democrat whose district includes most of the Philadelphia waterfront, is playing hardball. At the congressional hearing he produced evidence that some California grape growers being struck by the United Farm Workers have packaged Chilean grapes in California boxes. And since California grapes are not fumigated with methyl bromide—a pesticide use on Chilean grapes that the Environmental Protection Agency classifies as "extremely hazardous"—Fumo has threatened to stop every truck containing California grapes at the Ohio-Pennsylvania border to inspect the cargo for fruit flies.

—Philip M...

Democracy corrupted in Syracuse, N.Y.

SYRACUSE, N.Y.—While pundits discuss the conservative trends on college campuses, officials in Onondaga County know better. Students in college towns like Syracuse, armed with the right to vote, can play havoc with business-as-usual politics.

In 1984, progressive Democrat

Nancy Lorraine Hoffman of Syracuse beat a powerful Republican incumbent state senator by a few hundred votes. The 3,000 students who registered to vote that year played a vital role in Hoffman's victory. Following that election, county officials have reduced student registrations to almost zero.

For example, last fall the Onondaga County Board of Elections, a bipartisan panel, flatly rejected 800 student registrations and discour-

aged hundreds, perhaps thousands of other students from trying.

To bar students from voting the County Board of Elections issue "residency evaluation forms" along with the standard voter-registration card. The residency questionnaire gives students seven days to provide detailed information about their financial, marital and employment status. The forms serve only one purpose: they discriminate against student voters. Ele

tion officials admit that they draw circles around student ghettos and only send the questionnaire to new registrants within that area.

The new registration form has had a chilling effect on student registrants. In 1986, more than 600 registered students lost the right to vote because they didn't return the form on time. Yet, even returning the form doesn't help. In 1987, the county denied voting rights to 80 percent of the 1,000 students who registered and returned the questionnaire.

Dozens of students have taken the county to court and most of them have won. But such individual actions are expensive, time-consuming and help only the individual student. Efforts to discipline the county with more sweeping court actions have cost tens of thousands of dollars and as yet have failed to change the anachronistic election-law statutes local election officials hide behind.

New York Gov. Mario Cuomo's

half-hearted attempts to pass legislation repealing these statutes are annually scuttled by the powerful up-state Republicans in the state Senate.

Although other counties in New York used the state statute—passed in 1971 when the franchise was extended to 18, 19 and 20-year-olds—to harass students in the early '80s, almost all these counties treat students like any other voters today.

But in Syracuse the stakes are high. The current balance of power depends on the continued disenfranchisement of students. In 1986 former state Public Service Commissioner Rosemary Pooler, a nationally known anti-nuclear and consumer expert, lost to conservative Republican Rep. George Wortley by fewer than 1,000 votes. Only one-fourth of the students who registered were able to vote. If the county treated students as other county residents, Pooler today would be one of a hand-

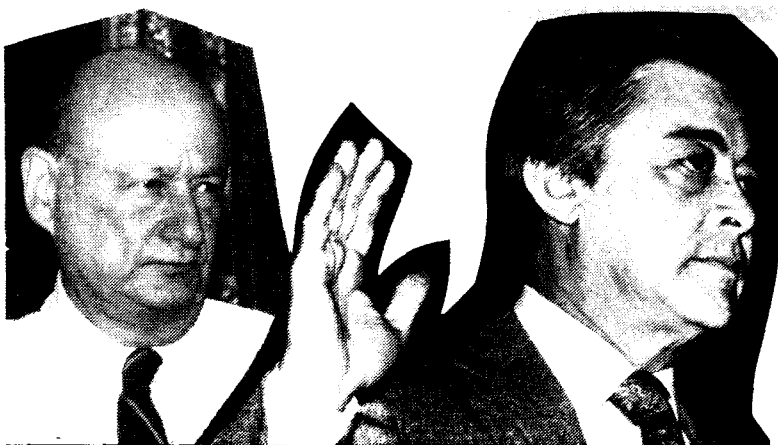
ful of women in the 100th Congress.

This fall Pooler will try again. Perhaps as a warning the county recently disenfranchised her daughter Penelope, a lifelong county resident and a first-year student at the university.

Last fall Tricia Kowalchuk spent a full day in court to win her right to vote. Nobody thanked her or applauded her citizenship spirit. Instead, a few weeks ago, the Onondaga Board of Elections sent Tricia a neatly typed form letter informing her that her right to vote had been revoked. The letter came in a white envelope stamped in thin red ink: "Register and Vote, It's Your Most Important Right."

In both cases county officials claim to have made a mistake. It seems they sent out the standard student disenfranchisement letters without checking their list of registered voters.

—Richard Watts



Board of Estimate members Koch and Golden.

New York City: where money talks and ethics walks

NEW YORK—This city's government is for sale. By pumping millions of dollars into the campaign coffers of New York's most powerful elected officials, real estate developers and other business leaders influence municipal decision-making.

Many of the leading contributors to municipal campaigns recently appeared before the New York State Commission on Government Integrity, a group Gov. Mario Cuomo formed in the wake of the city's 1986 corruption scandals. The commission spent two days listening to developers and other moguls explain how they skirted campaign finance laws and plowed money into the coffers of elected officials.

Developer Ian Bruce Eichner said he began contributing to campaigns when he needed a zoning variance—worth an estimated \$46 million—for a luxury tower in Manhattan. Soon after the proposed project made local headlines, Eichner gave Mayor Edward Koch a \$10,000 contribution and Brooklyn Borough President Howard Golden \$7,500. Eichner's lawyer, former city planning commissioner Howard Hornstein, made a \$10,000 contribution to Mayor Koch, a \$12,500 contribution to then-Manhattan Borough President Andrew Stein and a \$1,000 contribution

to both Brooklyn Borough President Golden and the former Bronx borough president, Stanley Simon, now under indictment for his role in the Wedtech scandal.

The mayor, the borough presidents, the comptroller and the city council president make up the city's Board of Estimate—the body that votes on zoning changes, contracts and other critical—lucrative—matters. In August 1985 the board approved the zoning variance for Eichner's project.

Donald Trump, the real estate and casino magnate, told the commission he had no idea how much money he has contributed to candidates. In fact, nobody in the last seven years has given more to candidates than Trump. According to figures compiled by the office of state Sen. Franz Leichter (D-Manhattan), who has made the issue of campaign financing one of his trademarks, Trump has contributed more than \$350,000 to Board of Estimate members since 1981. In the 1985 election, he parceled out \$150,000 in campaign donations, including \$50,000 just to Manhattan Borough President Stein. Trump evaded state election laws that limit corporate contributions to \$5,000 per candidate by exercising his civic interest through 18 subsidiary companies.

Gerald Guterman, another real estate tycoon, explained to the commission how in one month in 1985 he helped his "friend," Comptroller Harrison Golden, by writing 21

checks worth \$100,000. Guterman kept his contributions clean by washing them through 21 subsidiary companies.

This strategy goes all the way to City Hall, where Donald Zucker, a developer who doubles as an unpaid adviser to the mayor, has a desk. Zucker told the commission that he has a company set up solely for making campaign contributions. Zucker's J&D Realty contributed more than \$115,000 to Koch, Stein and Golden in 1985-86.

Before his public testimony Eichner explained to commission lawyers, "It would be bad business judgment to stop contributing to campaigns." But the commission failed to ask those who testified for the motives behind their largesse.

To Sen. Leichter, that was a major shortcoming. "When you take a look at who has contributed to Board of Estimate members and see these are the same people who come before it for approvals for their projects, it becomes apparent that money talks very loudly in this city's government." More than \$4 million was contributed to Board of Estimate members in the last election by those who had business requiring the board's approval.

Despite the corruption scandals that spawned the Integrity Commission, the spirit of giving continues in New York. Several weeks after negotiating a series of tax breaks with the city, the Dreyfus Corporation gave Mayor Koch's 1989 campaign committee \$3,000. Alexander Muss wants to build a huge luxury project in Brooklyn, but needs a zoning waiver valued at approximately \$95 million. One month after Muss announced the project on the steps of City Hall, flanked by Mayor Koch and Brooklyn Borough President Golden, Koch received a \$2,000 campaign contribution. Muss had already contributed \$16,500 to Golden in 1985-86 and gave him another \$2,000 in 1987.

Clearly, money still talks at City Hall.

—Doug Turetsky

Rights (C-FAR), Paul Adams, claims that LyphoMed increased the price in order to offset the research costs of an aerosol-based Pentamidine that the company is racing to develop. Aerosol Pentamidine has been shown to prevent the AIDS-related pneumonia. Once the aerosol hits the medical market, injectable Pentamidine will become obsolete. Says Adams, "They're using persons with AIDS to pay for their gamble on winning the aerosol patent." To protest this "price-gouging," C-FAR announced that it will commit civil disobedience at LyphoMed headquarters on May 7, the final day of national AIDS Action Week. In an attempt to buy out the protesters, the company has reportedly offered a free supply of Pentamidine to any C-FAR member with AIDS.

Reagan's beacon of democracy

Repression of union activity in South Korea is on the increase under the new government of President Roh Tae Woo, according to the Human Rights Committee of the National Council of Churches in Korea. The Hong Kong-based *Far Eastern Economic Review* reports that between January 1 and mid-March, Korean workers at 140 factories went on strike. Korean companies are responding to this union activity using two kinds of strike-breakers—the *Paekkoldan* (White Skull Corps) and *kusadae* (Save-the-Company Corps). The *Paekkoldan* are military units primarily used to break up demonstrations. Members of these units are trained in the martial arts and wear plain clothes. It is alleged that many in the *Paekkoldan* are thieves recruited from prisons with an offer of "alternative service." The *kusadae* are corporate militias of young men—probably moonlighting policemen—who are specifically employed to beat up and intimidate union activists. For example, at the Otron Electronics Company in Seoul, 10 union officials and their families were protesting the company kidnapping of their union presidents when they were assaulted by more than 60 club-wielding members of Otron Electronics' *kusadae*. All of the union leaders were seriously injured. Three are reportedly still in critical condition. And it was with a straight face that on April 1, President Reagan announced that as far as his administration was concerned, South Korea was successfully meeting internationally recognized standards for workers' rights.

South Korea bars Kennedys

Several members of the Kennedy family were among the 10 representatives of the Robert F. Kennedy Foundation who were recently denied visas by the South Korean government. The group was planning to visit Seoul this month to present the 1987 Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Awards to Kim Keun Tae and In Jae Keun. Kim founded the Youth Alliance for Democracy and is currently serving seven years in prison for violating national security laws. Kim's wife, In, had planned to attend the awards ceremony in Washington last November but was refused a passport by the previous government of Chun Doo Hwan.

A few good street fighters

The Marine Corps has expanded its basic program for new recruits to include a week of "basic warrior training." According to the *San Diego Tribune*, the last week in the nine-week boot camp cycle, will now be known as "John Wayne Week." The Marines' new commandant, Gen. Alfred Gray, explains: "We must take these fine young people we have today and make sure they are taught to be street-fighters. Much of our combat...in the future, as well as much of our crisis requirements today, has to do with built-up areas—urban warfare."

The urine blues

The war on drugs is raging. In an effort to prevent government workers from passing false urine, new federal regulations require all agencies that deal with national security matters to stock up on the cleanser that turns toilet water blue. This will prevent drug users from diluting their sample. According to the *Washington Post*, regulating toilet water is just one of the ways the government will ensure that federal employees in sensitive jobs don't cheat during random drug tests. Employees who think they can avoid the process by carrying a hidden vial of untainted urine should think again. Last week's new regulation also requires that as soon as the urine is passed its temperature be taken. □

By Kathryn Phillips

CONVENTIONAL POLITICAL WISDOM SAYS women shouldn't run for office unless they know they can win, and that challenging an incumbent is an almost certain way to lose a race. But conventional political wisdom says a lot of things that Eleanor Smeal, the former two-time head of the National Organization for Women (NOW), doesn't buy anymore.

Since October, like an evangelist on a mission, Smeal has been hitting major cities around the country with her Feminization of Power campaign. At small meetings and large rallies she has been telling women to forget what they've heard before. It is time, she says, to change tactics and flood ballots with women's names. She has been asking, pleading and cajoling women to take a chance and run for political office.

The theory behind her campaign is simple. If more feminists run, says Smeal, more will win. But in most cases women don't run unless somebody asks them.

"We've got to get some candidates, folks. If nobody's going to go into politics, it's like saying we're going to have this crackerjack football team, but nobody applies. You've got to recruit the stars. You've got to have a team," Smeal said recently, during a stop in Los Angeles. "If you're only fielding one person and the other side is fielding 11, guess what? You're going to get beat. And right now, that's what we're doing. We're fielding one and they're fielding 11. We're fielding about 10 percent of the spots."

This imbalance, Smeal said, is ludicrous and unnecessary.

"We've got doctors, we've got lawyers, we've got social workers, we have all kinds of organizers. There are [potential candidates] sitting in our midsts and if somebody is not saying 'you've got a duty,' we're fielding one in 10 folks. No wonder the other side is winning."

The "other side" Smeal speaks of are non-feminist legislators, of which there are hundreds in Congress alone. And while male legislators can be feminists, Smeal and others like her, veterans of Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) battles, know that most aren't. Feminists' concerns will be fully addressed in Congress, state houses and city councils only when there are more women sitting in those bodies, they say.

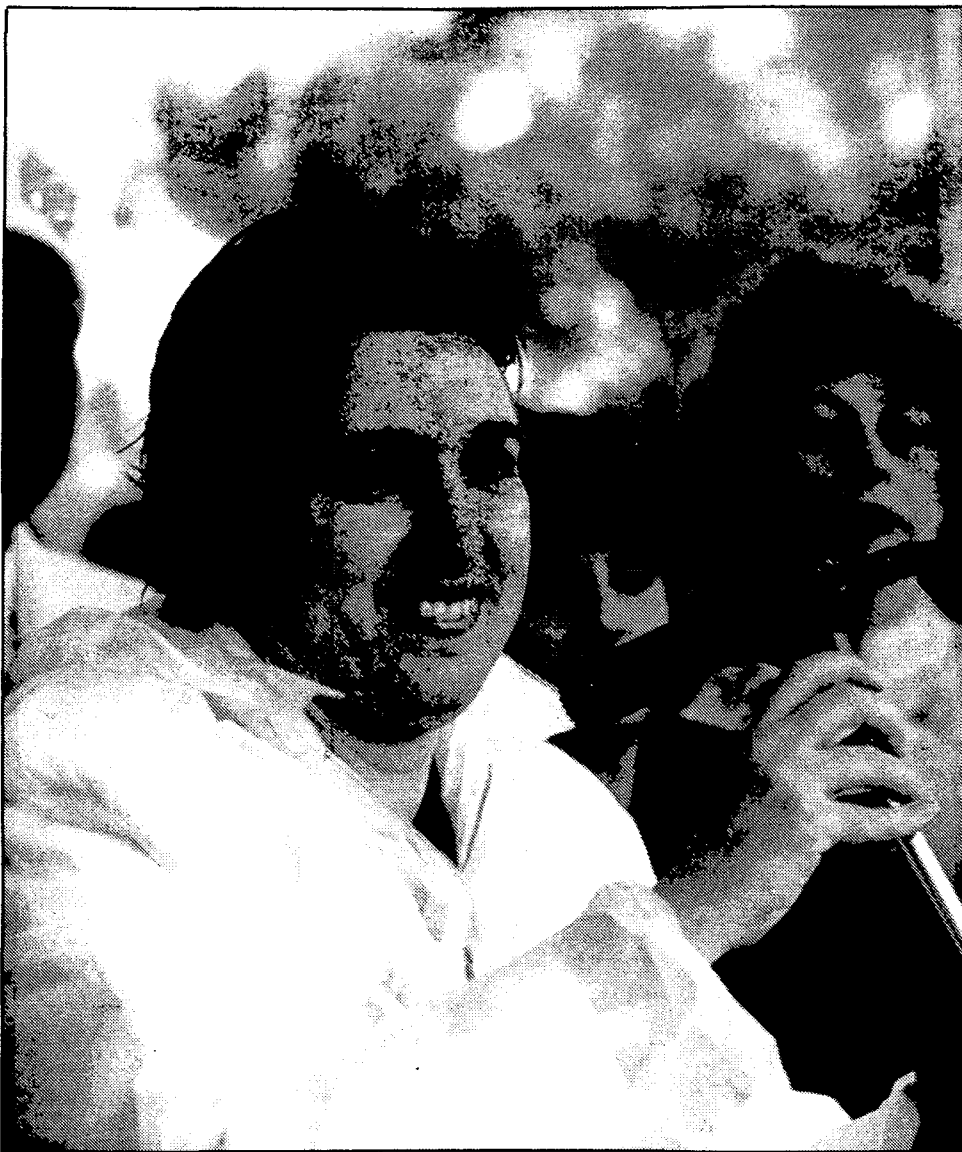
A cautious approach: The conviction that more women needed to get elected to office helped create the National Women's Political Caucus (NWPC) in 1971. Increasingly, other women's organizations also have focused on electoral politics. But most, like NWPC, have taken a cautious approach, targeting specific, almost certainly winnable seats. They have emphasized grooming potential candidates over a period of time, sometimes years, before sending them into their first races.

Thus, though not publicly criticizing Smeal's latest effort, some feminist leaders and political analysts are lukewarm about it.

"It certainly is true that if you flood the ticket, you're going to have more women running. The question is whether they're viable candidates or you just have women running to run," said Kathy Kleeman, a research associate at the Center for the American Woman and Politics. "Whether it will translate into more women in office this year, we'll just have to wait and see."

6 IN THESE TIMES APRIL 20-26, 1988

Ex-NOW chief's new project: flooding ballots with women



Since October Smeal has been asking and pleading and cajoling women to run for political office.

As of early April, 587 organizations, mostly state and local women's political, labor and business groups—including some state and

FEMINISM

local NWPC chapters—had endorsed Smeal's campaign. The NWPC national board has remained neutral, however. A lot of NWPC members aren't convinced Smeal's ballot-flooding approach will help elect significantly more feminists, said Irene Natividad, NWPC chair. But, she added, "there are many ways to chip on a rock."

The slow and steady approach traditionally followed by women's political organizations has resulted in measurable gains in the number of women elected to office. Nevertheless, women hold only about 15 percent of the country's state legislative seats and barely 5 percent of the seats in Congress. At the rate gains are now being made, women won't reach parity in representation for many decades. Smeal believes feminists have placed too much emphasis on training and not enough on recruiting. "Who are we teaching?" she asked.

The theory behind Eleanor Smeal's Feminization of Power campaign is simple: if more feminists run, more will win. But her effort to get as many women as possible on ballots nationwide goes against conventional political wisdom.

The lessons of ERA: The last ERA fight provided the impetus to test a flood-the-ballot tactic to get more women in office fast.

"In 1982, when the ERA went down, our slogan was 'We'll remember in November,'" Smeal said. NOW, led by Smeal, targeted Florida to demonstrate the slogan's seriousness. Feminists mounted a campaign to double from four to eight the number of women sitting in Florida's state senate. They drafted women to run in 20 of the state senate's 40 races. Nine women were elected, eight of them feminists. The tactic worked.

Last year Smeal decided it was time to apply the tactic nationwide. She opted not to run for another term as NOW president, and instead began planning the Feminization of Power campaign and forming its new parent organization, Fund for the Feminist Majority.

The fund, a non-membership organization, has a tiny staff split between headquarters in Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles. The Los Angeles operation works out of the offices of theatrical producer Peg Yorkin. Yorkin provided the fund with a loan of several hundred thousand dollars to get the organi-

zation and campaign off the ground, according to Smeal.

The still-evolving campaign is built around Smeal's national speaking tour that is primarily motivational. Before Smeal arrives in a state, local groups of feminists are organized into support groups to identify potential candidates, plant the idea of running and then provide emotional and moral support during the campaign. The candidate is left to rely on herself to learn the technical details of the campaign and fund raising, although Feminist Majority campaign materials provide some guidelines. Also, local feminists tapped to be recruiters and supporters are often active in other women's political groups and become sources of technical information themselves.

The Fund for the Feminist Majority recently established a house-party program designed to encourage women to gather in homes, learn about electoral politics and discuss how they can put more feminists in office—either by running or recruiting and supporting candidates. Plans are in the works to take the campaign to college campuses next fall.

On the road: In October Smeal kicked off the campaign in Los Angeles in an event attended by about 1,200 women. In the following months the campaign went to Dallas, Houston, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Pittsburgh and Boston. At each of these stops, Smeal and a network of local feminists have identified potential women candidates, urged them to run and then formed support groups to provide moral support and advice.

Throughout this month the campaign will be engaged in its most intensive recruiting activity so far. Smeal will be travelling up and down Florida, hitting nine cities, recruiting candidates for office. Fran Bohnsack, the campaign's Florida coordinator, said that by the state's mid-July closing date for candidate filing, the campaign ambitiously hopes to see 200 new women running in the local and state offices. Surveys indicate that women running for office win nearly 60 percent of the time, Bohnsack said. If just 50 percent of the new candidates win, Florida feminists would gain 100 new representative voices.

It is too early to tell whether Smeal's ballot-flooding tactic will work nationwide. Filing hasn't closed in some states, and in others figures are not available yet from the state offices responsible for keeping track of candidate filing. But at her recent Boston rally, Smeal asked women in the audience who thought they would run for office to join her on the stage. Sixty stepped forward.

It's all right even if few run this year, Smeal said, because 1988 is principally a test year, a planning year.

"I know you cannot spread a new idea, a new campaign—this is a big country—that wide, that fast," she said. "If we want to make a big impact by 1992, which is my target date, I [have] to have at least one sort of trial period and then one big push for 1990 and then a really big push in 1992. I hope by 1990 we're nationwide and in 1992 we have some impact."

The year 1992 is important because it will be the first election year after the 1991 congressional district reapportionment. Feminists hope to have enough strong candidates in place at lower offices to fill new congressional seats expected to be created in Florida, California and Texas. They also want to be ready to challenge vulnerable incumbents in redrawn districts.

By John B. Judis

WASHINGTON, D.C.

IF DEMOCRATIC PROSPECTS IN THE PRESIDENTIAL election look cloudy, Democratic prospects in these congressional races appear positively sunny. Even if they lose the presidency, the Democrats stand a good chance of *increasing* their 54-46 margin in the Senate and their 257-177 margin in the House.

This bears out a curious feature of contemporary U.S. politics: while the Republicans remain the stronger party in national elections, they have largely failed to use the Reagan years to build strong state and local parties. In the North and Midwest, conservative Republicanism is virtually defunct.

Senate races: In the Senate races, the arithmetic would appear to favor the Republicans. Overall, 33 seats are being contested, and Democrats hold 18 of them. But 13 of 18 Democrats are almost sure to win. For instance, Sens. Edward Kennedy (MA), George Mitchell (ME), Daniel Patrick Moynihan (NY), Paul Sarbanes (MD), Robert Byrd (WV), Spark Matsunaga (HI), Donald W. Riegle Jr. (MI), Dennis DeConcini (AZ), Jim Sasser (TN) and Lloyd Bentsen (TX) are facing only token opposition. And former Gov. Chuck Robb is sure to pick up the Virginia Senate seat vacated by Republican Paul Trible. In short, it doesn't appear that the Democrats can do worse than come out with a 50-50 split in the Senate. And they may do considerably better.

Among the Republicans, only seven are sure bets. Incumbents in Nevada and Nebraska trail popular challengers by a 2-1 ratio in current opinion polls. Even if the Democratic presidential ticket lags, Democrats stand a better than even chance of winning back the Republican seat in Washington vacated by Daniel Evans and of retaining Democratic seats in New Jersey, Ohio, Florida and Wisconsin. That would mean a 57-43 Democratic edge in the Senate next year. And if Michael Dukakis is the Democratic nominee and sweeps New England in November, liberal Democrats could upset Republican incumbents Lowell Weicker in Connecticut and John Chafee in Rhode Island.

Senate contests in Mississippi, Florida and Ohio will have the most bearing on the parties' future strategies. In Mississippi, Democratic Rep. Wayne Dowdy is facing Republican Rep. Trent Lott for the seat vacated by Democrat John Stennis. Dowdy is a New South moderate—conservative on foreign policy (he backed contra aid), but liberal on civil rights and the economy—who has a folksy "good ole boy" campaign style. Lott, the minority whip, is a hardline conservative who voted against the Grove City civil rights bill.

Dowdy's victory will depend on his building statewide the kind of biracial coalition that swept him to victory in his Jackson seat. Lott, who is expected to get only about 5 percent of the black vote, will probably have to get about 70 percent of the white vote to win. This election could get ugly, and its outcome may depend on whom the Democrats nominate for president and vice president. In 1984, for instance, Walter Mondale's association with Jesse Jackson sparked a record turnout among Mississippi whites and led to an unexpectedly easy victory for Sen. Thad Cochran over popular former Gov. William Winter.

In Florida, former Gov. Reubin Askew is likely to be the Democratic nominee against Republican Rep. Connie Mack in the battle to fill Democrat Lawton Chiles' seat. Like Dowdy, Askew is a New South moderate, but

A good year for Democratic candidates

Sure Democratic Winners

Bentsen (TX)
Bingaman (NM)
Burdick (ND)
Byrd (WV)
DeConcini (AZ)
Kennedy (MA)
Matsunaga (HI)
Melcher (MT)
Mitchell (ME)
Moynihan (NY)
Riegle (MI)
Robb (VA)
Sarbanes (MD)
Sasser (TN)

Good Democratic Bets

Askew (FL)
Bryan (NV)
Kerrey (NB)

Too Close to Call

Dowdy vs. Lott (MS)
Humphrey vs. Durenberger (MI)
Lautenberg vs. Dawkins (NJ)
McCarthy vs. Wilson (CA)
Metzenbaum vs. Voinovich (OH)
Wisconsin (candidates to be selected)

Sure Republican Winners

Danforth (MO)
Hatch (UT)
Heinz (PA)
Jeffords (VT)
Lugar (IN)
Roth (DE)
Wallop (WY)

Good Republican Bets

Chafee (RI)
Weicker (CT)



1988 SENATE RACES

Askew's style is much more that of a Southern Dukakis. Mack is one of the leaders of the Conservative Opportunity Society, a bloc of obstreperous New Right House members. Both candidates will raise a lot of money, and if Askew can decisively defeat Mack, he will deal a blow to Republican conservatives in the South.

In Ohio, incumbent Howard Metzenbaum, the archetypal liberal Democrat, faces a serious challenge from Cleveland Mayor George Voinovich. Voinovich is a moderate Republican who has attacked the Reagan administration's urban budget cuts. But the Reagan administration, eager to defeat Metzenbaum, nevertheless made Ohio the first stop on the president's congressional campaign tour.

Voinovich's chances of winning rest on Ohio's political geography. Democrats win in Ohio by racking up 100,000-vote margins in Cleveland's Cuyahoga County. But Voinovich could do well in Cleveland. He has been a popular mayor and he commands the loyalty of the city's many Eastern European ethnics. Republican strategists believe that if Voinovich can win 40 percent in Cuyahoga County, he can beat Metzenbaum. This would be a major setback for the Democrats.

Four other close Senate races will involve liberal Democrats. In Minnesota, Attorney General Hubert H. "Skip" Humphrey III, the son of former Vice President Hubert Humphrey, is facing incumbent Republican David Durenberger. Durenberger has flip-flopped on contra aid and has suffered widely publicized personal problems. In New Jersey, colorless incumbent Democrat Frank Lautenberg is being challenged by political moderate Wall Street executive and former West Point football star Pete Dawkins, who nevertheless began his campaign by attacking Lautenberg's support of a nuclear freeze. And in California, equally colorless Lt. Gov. Leo McCarthy will challenge vulnerable incumbent Republican Pete Wilson. These races will hinge on money, television and the presidential campaign.

In the Senate elections, one can see the

outlines of the post-Reagan parties emerging. In the Democratic Party, liberal Democrats dominate the North, and a new generation of moderates—including Robb, Dowdy and Askew—control the South. Coalitions are clearly more possible between these groups than they were between Northern machine Democrats and Dixiecrats.

In the Republican Party, Eastern and Midwestern moderates have beaten back the conservative challenge. New Jersey is a case

CAMPAIGN 88

in point. In 1978, New Right Republican Jeff Bell upset incumbent liberal Republican Clifford Case in the Senate primary. Bell was defeated by Bill Bradley in the general election, but it was widely assumed that Bell's victory spelled the death of liberal and moderate Republicanism in New Jersey. But a decade later the state's governor, Thomas Kean, is a leading party moderate who was re-elected with substantial black and labor support and the party's Senate candidate,

Even if they lose the presidency, the Democrats stand a good chance of increasing their majorities in the Senate and House.

Dawkins, is an Eisenhower-style import from Wall Street who is resting his campaign on Kean's shoulders.

House races: In the House races, Democrats enjoy an even greater advantage over Republicans. By my count, based in part on

the estimates of the *Congressional Quarterly* and *The Cook Political Report*, the Democrats have a good chance of unseating Republican incumbents in 19 House seats, while Republicans have a chance of unseating Democrats in only 10 seats. In the North, even some first-term Democrats who barely won in 1986 in traditionally Republican districts are not yet facing serious Republican opposition. In Indiana, Rep. Jim Jontz, a former Citizen Action activist, is being challenged by a former House aid who has never before run for office. In Long Island, N.Y., no Republican has yet emerged to challenge Democrat George J. Hochbrueckner, who won in 1986 on the strength of his opposition to the Shoreham nuclear plant.

The Republicans' best chance of winning new House seats is in the South. The Republicans could win back three seats in North Carolina and one each in Virginia, Mississippi and South Carolina. Democratic success in these and other Southern House races will depend on the candidates' ability to develop white-black coalitions.

One House contest is particularly important for black Democrats. In predominantly rural central Louisiana, Democrats enjoy a 12-to-1 voter registration advantage. In 1984 Reagan barely edged out Mondale; but in 1986 Republican Rep. Clyde Holloway won the seat vacated by Democrat Cathy Long. Holloway's opponent was black attorney Faye Williams, who in this 36 percent black district edged out three other white Democrats in an all-party primary and went into the runoff election against Holloway. Williams is running again, and with two other white Democrats and Holloway splitting the white vote, she stands a good chance of gaining a rematch.

Democratic and Republican success in the closely contested House races will also depend on the Democratic presidential ticket. Democrats are currently brooding about two extreme scenarios. After Jackson won the Michigan Caucus, Reagan Democrat Ben Wat-

Continued on page 22

IN THESE TIMES APRIL 20-26, 1988 7

HELEN JONES MAKES IT POSSIBLE FOR A FRAIL, ailing 88-year-old woman in Manhattan to continue living in her own home. Five days a week, Jones, a 52-year-old black woman, travels an hour from the Bronx to spend 12-hour days feeding and caring for the woman and her household needs, making sure she takes her medication and helping her with everything from visiting the doctor to getting to the toilet.

"I'm a person who likes to help people," Jones said. "I care very deeply for senior citizens. They have been through a lot, and I feel these times should be good times. They shouldn't be going through a lot of things they go through."

Neither should Helen Jones have to go through much of what she goes through. As an employee of a non-profit home health care agency, Jones has been dependent on decisions of public bodies that fund the home care program—the city, state and federal government (which pays half the cost through Medicaid). Jones has been paid \$4.45 an hour with no health insurance and no job security. If a client dies or goes to the hospital, her pay stops until she gets another client.

"Sometimes I have to borrow money from my mother or friends to make ends meet," she said. "With rent going up, it's been very rough. And right now I have some bills from the hospital that I can't afford to pay. I haven't had any health insurance. It's a shame when you're working every day and can't afford to pay your bills. It really makes you feel bad."

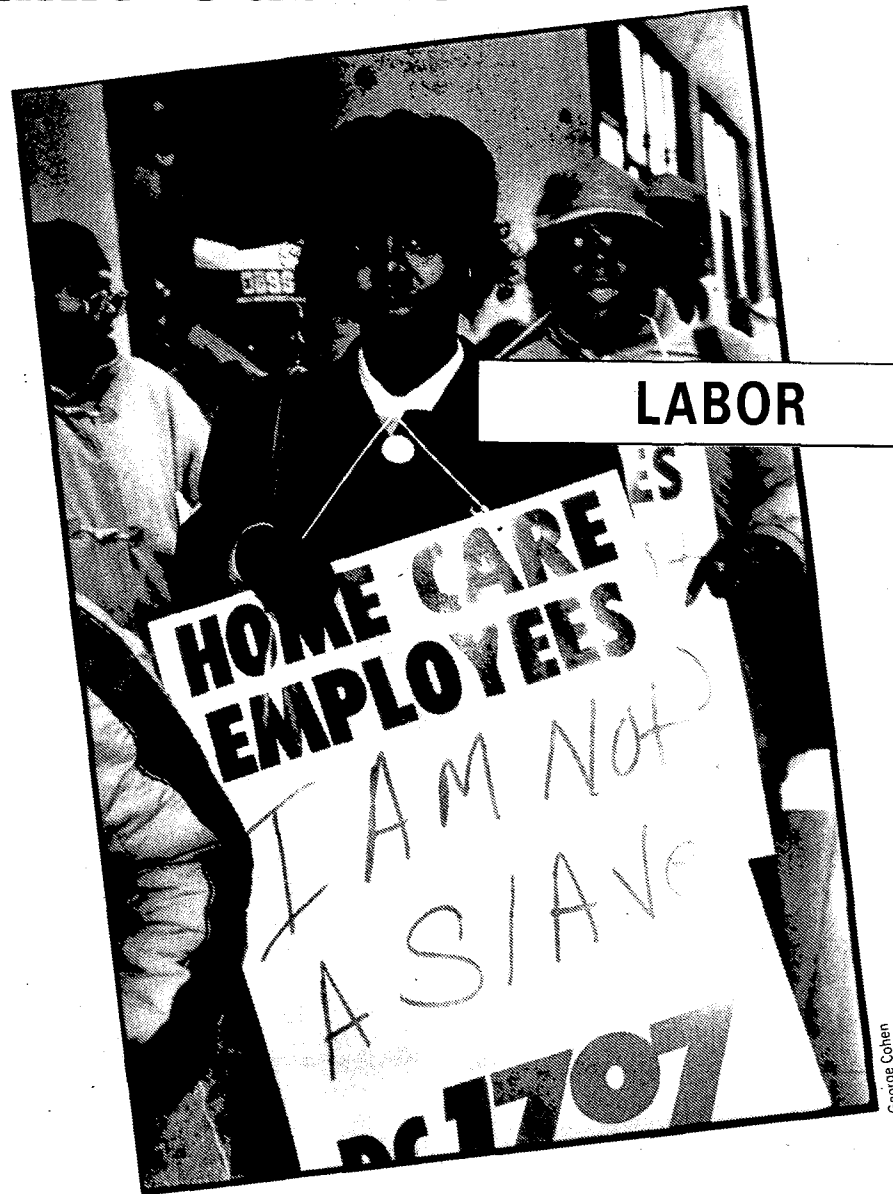
Now ends may be closer to meeting for Jones and the roughly 60,000 home care workers in New York City's program for poor, medically incapacitated individuals. Her union, Hospital Workers Union, Local 1199, a division of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, and the home care local of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) successfully mobilized the community and political leaders to raise wages dramatically—42 percent over three years—and provide family health benefits for the first time. By the end of the contract the starting wage will rise from \$4.15 an hour to \$5.90 an hour. Not enough, Jones said, "but we have to crawl before we walk."

The victory comes when booming home health care is likely to grow even faster, if Congress approves legislation early next month to expand home care coverage under Medicare, the federal health care program for the elderly. Providing long-term care of the elderly and chronically ill has become a potent political issue. It was the top concern in a recent survey of Americans over 40, and it was the top domestic goal for the next president among younger Americans in a *Rolling Stone* poll.

But so far home care has flourished on the backs of middle-aged black, Hispanic and immigrant women who typically are paid no more than the minimum wage and receive no benefits.

Fragmented families: The popularity of home care reflects a convergence of several fundamental changes in American life. As more women enter the workforce, often as the sole support of their families, and as families are more geographically dispersed, society can no longer depend on the traditional unpaid labor of the woman at home—the daughter or daughter-in-law tending an aging parent or even a chronically ill child

As home health care grows, unions do their homework



or spouse. And the old traditions of ill-paid domestic service have disappeared, only to be resurrected as day care and home care with the same faces.

At the same time, institutional care, from hospitals to nursing homes, has grown extremely expensive and often oppressive. Doctors and social workers agree that most chronically sick or partly incapacitated elderly people are usually better off living at home. Most elderly and ill people agree, and politicians see home care as a cheap way out.

In 1983 new Medicare rules for reimbursing hospitals led to elderly being discharged "quicker and sicker," increasing the need for home care. In addition, the elderly, especially the "old old" fraction of the population is growing. New technologies, such as compact kidney dialysis units or respirators, make it possible for more people to be treated at home. And the rapid rise in AIDS has led to the need for more long-term caregivers.

A haphazard, irrational system with gross disparities has emerged since the home care business was first triggered by Medicare in 1965. The industry, once dominated by public, not-for-profit, charitable or religious agencies, also spawned a profit-oriented sector that has quintupled since the early '70s. Now accounting for about one-fourth of all clients, the profit sector is increasingly concentrated in regional and national chains. Medicare paid for 40 percent of the estimated \$6 billion spent on home health services in 1985, Medicaid another sixth.

But in recent years home care coverage has been stunted by the Reagan administration's strict and irrational enforcement of Medicare standards. For example, one

largely disabled elderly man was disqualified as not "homebound" because he could maneuver down 10 steps in his building to a restaurant.

The union-led coalition in New York was able to win its demands not just because they were able to portray their members as grossly underpaid and underappreciated—in the manner of Local 1199's original hospital worker campaigns—but also because the home care agencies that contract with the city to provide care and public officials realized that they faced a crisis. Wages were so low that it was increasingly difficult to get people to work, since most of the home care workers would be better off on welfare. The new immigration law also will restrict a major source of workers.

The AIDS crisis, coming after an earlier cutback of 5,000 hospital beds, has crowded New York hospitals beyond their capacity. "but because they don't have sufficient home care workers," explained Dennis Rivera, executive vice president of Local 1199, "people who are ready to go home but are not independent remain in a hospital setting at an exorbitant cost."

More working poor: The home care industry is in many ways typical of the Reagan era job boom: low-wage, often part-time service jobs expanding ranks of the "working poor." A Hunter College survey showed New York home care workers were overwhelmingly women, 47 years old on the average (with a range of 22 to 85 years old), 70 percent black, half foreign-born and two-thirds single, separated or widowed. Three-fourths of them were the primary household breadwinner, even though most made less than \$5,000 a year. But nobody knows how many

there are nationally: a Bureau of Labor Statistics surely grossly underestimates the number of home care aides at 197,000 (projected to grow to 336,000 by 2000).

Most home care workers for New York public programs were unionized in recent years—20,000 each for Local 1199 and the Service Employees (SEIU), which peculiarly did not take part in the recent campaign, and around 9,000 for AFSCME. But campaigns underway with some success in cities such as Chicago, Los Angeles, New Orleans and Boston have faced great difficulties despite workers' enthusiasm for unionization. The widely dispersed workers rarely come together. When organizers began contacting employees of one agency in Chicago at their check pick-up point and training session, the agency began mailing both checks and training instructions to foil the campaign. Other employers have stalled recognition or bargaining.

Los Angeles County, where the Service Employees are trying to organize 40,000 home care workers, has insisted that the clients, not the county that pays for and runs the programs, are the employers. Several of the SEIU organizing campaigns were initiated in the late '70s by ACORN, the poor peoples' organizing network, then absorbed by the union a few years ago.

Home care workers obviously would greatly benefit from the pending federal legislation to raise the minimum wage, but they were almost excluded from the California minimum wage hike. Yet the legislation introduced by Rep. Claude Pepper for long-term care under Medicare says nothing about improving workers' pay and benefits. It does call for improved training that home care workers themselves want in order to upgrade their jobs and to reduce abuse of clients. By applying the 1.45 percent Medicare payroll tax to currently excluded income above \$45,000 a year, Pepper's bill would raise in a progressive way about \$30.6 billion through 1992, more than covering projected costs of \$23.7 billion. And it would make home care an entitlement through a social insurance program, not the current patchwork welfare allotment. But the financial wizardry relies on continued exploitation of minority women.

Local 1199 and AFSCME could not expect home care workers to strike. So they had to take a different tack, bringing together such disparate figures as Jesse Jackson and Cardinal John O'Connor, mobilizing local politicians such as Manhattan Borough President David Dinkins and Gov. Mario Cuomo, and turning out demonstrations of thousands of home-care workers and a large Jobs With Justice rally of union supporters. The campaign stimulated many supportive articles and editorials and ran newspaper ads. The final deal, which will also give most home care workers a retroactive lump sum payment of \$1,000 to \$2,000, was worked out just before the April 1 state budget deadline.

Besides improving the lives of the 145,000 poor New Yorkers in home care workers' families and pumping an estimated \$315 million annually into poor neighborhoods, the settlement effectively sets a new minimum wage that should spread to other low-wage workers and may help organizing, according to former Local 1199 Executive Secretary Moe Foner. It will give welfare recipients incentive to shift from welfare to work. And it should improve the quality of home and hospital health care, ultimately benefitting both those giving and those getting help in keeping vulnerable lives intact. □

By Arthur R. Kroeber

NEW DELHI, INDIA

HATHE SINGH STOOD IN A FIELD OF CRACKED earth and withered cotton plants, holding a tiny, hard green bud in his hand. "It should be this big by now," he said, opening his fist wide. "This crop will produce nothing. It's a 200 percent loss—I've lost all the money I could get out of it, and all that I put into it."

Singh is a small landholder in India's Haryana state, about 100 miles west of New Delhi. He and thousands of small farmers like him suffered last year from India's worst drought of the century.

In two-thirds of the country, including the fertile Punjab, the monsoon rains came two months late or not at all. Production of food grains fell about 15 million tons short of last year's goal of 160 million metric tons.

The drought brought a sudden halt to the explosive growth in food production India has enjoyed for the last two decades as a result of the Green Revolution. More important, it drove home the fact that drought has become an annual occurrence in many parts of India, and that the costs—both financial and environmental—of the Green Revolution are beginning to catch up with its benefits.

The term "Green Revolution" refers to dramatic improvements in the yields of certain crops, especially wheat and rice, made possible by massive irrigation, use of chemical fertilizers and new hybrid seeds.

India's Green Revolution began after a disastrous drought in the mid-'60s that forced the government to import more than 30 million tons of grain from 1965 to 1968. The results were spectacular: India's food grain production soared from 72 million tons in 1965 to 150 million tons in 1986. These gains outpaced the demand for food. Not only was India able to feed itself by the late '70s, but it could also build up reserve stocks of grain totalling 23 million metric tons by early 1987. These stocks enabled the government to provide relief to peasants and farmers in the drought year.

But the gains of the Green Revolution are levelling off, and Indian agriculture faces three tough challenges. First, in order to meet the demands of a population expected to hit one billion in about 20 years, annual grain production must rise to 225 million metric tons by the year 2000. In other words, Indian agriculture must expand even more rapidly in the next two decades than it has in the last two, even though the greatest gains of the Green Revolution are probably past.

Second, as Deputy Director M.V. Rao of the Indian Council on Agricultural Research points out, "Famines come not as the result of a shortage of grain, but as a result of a lack in purchasing power." If the specter of famine is to be banished forever from the Indian countryside, farmers' incomes must be raised—something that the Green Revolution has failed, for the most part, to accomplish.

Finally, the government must recognize that drought is a chronic and not an episodic problem, caused more by careless agricultural policies than by lack of rainfall, and that steps need to be taken to preserve the long-term health of India's farmland.

A failure story: The shakiness of India's self-sufficiency in food is illustrated by Hathe Singh's story. In 1970 Singh, then a tailor in

After the Green Revolution: the struggle to produce food

the town of Hissar, heard that irrigation and modern technology were making agriculture a profitable business. He collected his savings, left town and bought three and a half acres 25 miles away.

With help from the recently founded Haryana Agricultural University, he started growing millet, cotton, sorghum and a new and very profitable crop—grapes. In the mid-'70s an irrigation canal began to supplement the 20 inches of rain that usually fall during the four-month summer monsoon.

The farm prospered. Singh was making 30,000 rupees a year, or \$2,300—a comfortable living in a country where the annual per-capita income is only \$270. Singh used the money to improve the farm, build a five-room house and send his four sons to school.

But last year, for the first time, the rains did not come. Irrigation, which usually supplies about 10 percent of his water, was hopelessly inadequate.

"We had nothing to speak of," Singh said of the rains. "Maybe a centimeter or two. There's nothing for me to do. I just keep still and sit in the house. I am having many sleepless nights. I can sleep when the rains come."

Singh's cotton and grapes were wiped out; the sorghum crop was cut by two-thirds. "If the government helps me, perhaps I will be all right," he said. "If it doesn't I'll have nothing."

Failures like Singh's were common last year, and their impact on the economy broad-ranging. Aside from causing food shortages, a drought year means that less cotton reaches India's textile mills, depressing production of one of the country's leading exports. It also means farmers have less money to spend on farm equipment, one of the major products of Indian industry.

As a result, industrial production—which had been growing at 6 to 8 percent a year in the '80s—may show a slower rate of growth in 1988. Inflation, according to the government, was 9.2 percent last year, and unofficial estimates say it could run as high as 14 percent this year.

But more worrisome than the immediate effects of the drought are the mounting costs of high-tech Green Revolution agriculture. Irrigation projects are expensive to build and maintain. The government spends about

\$700 million a year on irrigation subsidies. The price of petroleum-based chemical fertilizers—critical for Green Revolution crops—shot up dramatically in the '70s.

Irrigated wheat and rice costs 10 to 15 percent more than rain-fed grain. To keep the market price down, the government sells grain in fair-price shops at well below the price it pays to farmers. The government's

INDIA

food subsidy bill was \$1.6 billion in 1986-87 and may touch \$2 billion this year. Taken together, agricultural subsidies are the third-largest component of the national budget, behind interest payments and defense.

Mostly because of the subsidy policy, the net effect of the Green Revolution has been to transfer wealth from the countryside to the cities. According to a 1986 study by two World Bank economists, India's farmers are no richer, as a group, than they were 20 years ago. Instead, urban consumers have benefited from food prices that have stayed relatively low while their incomes have risen.

Even scarier are the ecological problems caused by irrigation-intensive agriculture. "There has been an excessive emphasis on food grain production, even in areas which are not suitable for it," said Saurabh Sinha, a drought specialist at the Center for Science and Environment, India's leading environmental group. Sinha noted that outside north India's fertile Gangetic plain, much of the subcontinent receives only 15-30 inches of rain a year—plenty for certain kinds of crops, like millet, legumes and oilseeds, but not enough for wheat or rice.

Irrigating these areas for grain production would be enormously expensive, but their productivity could be increased cheaply by introducing drought-resistant strains of seeds, encouraging farmers to rotate their crops, and reviving traditional methods of conserving rainwater.

The irrigation of dry lands often leads to the enrichment of a few at the expense of rational land use. In the central state of Maharashtra, for example, a small group of politically powerful sugar-cane growers has monopolized the irrigation supply, and the

sugar-cane fields stand like oases in a desert of undercultivated land. The water sucked up by one acre of sugar-cane could irrigate five acres of rice, nine of wheat, 21 of chickpeas or 30 of millet.

Modern agricultural methods, according to Sinha, are partly responsible for the chronic drought conditions affecting many parts of India today. Although drought is popularly believed to be the result of low rainfall, there are actually three types of drought: meteorological (deficient rainfall), hydrological (low groundwater levels) and agricultural (crop failure). Meteorological droughts like that of 1987 make the headlines, but some areas of India—notably the western state of Gujarat and some rice-growing areas in the south—have suffered from hydrological drought for several years, as the result of deforestation and overexploitation of groundwater.

Grain at all costs: Both of these causes, environmentalists charge, can be traced to India's grain-at-all-costs strategy. As more and more land has been cleared to make grain fields, forests have been cut down. Trees help the ground retain moisture, and as they are cut down the ground dries out. The increased demand for irrigation and drinking water has led to the boring of numerous tubewells, which further reduces groundwater.

As a result, according to the Center for Science and Environment, the number of Indians affected by drought rose from 18 million in 1960 to 191 million in 1984. Meanwhile, the government's annual expenditure on disaster relief (mostly for flood and drought victims) skyrocketed from \$6.1 million in 1960 to \$1.5 billion last year.

The two goals of preserving the environment and improving yields are not incompatible. On the ecological side, the Center for Science and Environment recommends that more attention be paid to rain-fed, drought-resistant crops, and that a new national land policy be created in which land is classified as forest, pasture or agricultural land—to prevent deforestation and ensure an adequate fodder supply. Similarly, a recent report by a team under the Indo-U.S. Subcommittee on Agriculture estimated that nearly 50 million metric tons could be added to India's annual grain production by the year 2000 through improvements on unirrigated, dryland agriculture.

The team—like the Center for Science and Environment—recommended reviving traditional water-storage methods and using a greater diversity of crops in drought-prone areas. It also suggested the use of new techniques like "agro-forestry," in which rows of food crops are interspersed with woody species that help the soil hold water and fix nitrogen in the ground, and which can be used as a source of cattle fodder.

A coherent strategy for Indian agriculture in the 21st century requires decisive and thoughtful planning—something India's slow-moving bureaucracy is notoriously reluctant to supply. But the stakes are high—70 percent of India's 750-million people still make their living off the land, and success or failure in the fields will have a great impact on India's overall development. Unless India creates a new agricultural policy, the suffering of farmers like Hathe Singh may soon become a distressing annual event. □

Arthur R. Kroeber is a correspondent for Pacific News Service in South Asia.

IN THESE TIMES APRIL 20-26, 1988 9



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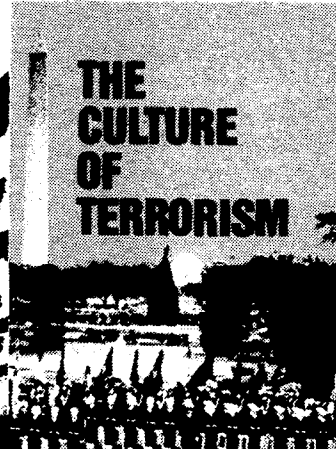
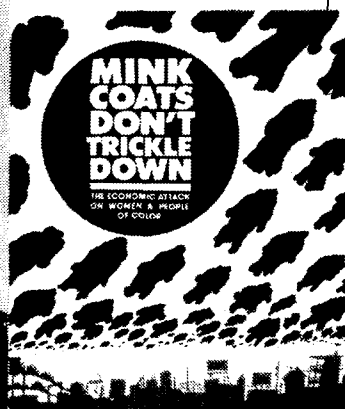
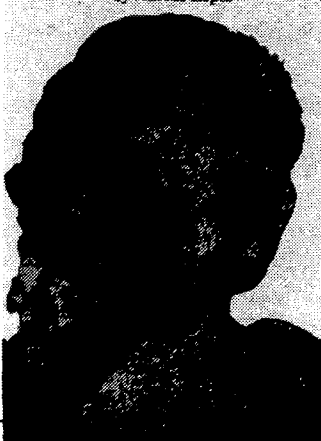
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By Denise Rinaldo

NETANYA, ISRAEL

THE WEST BANK VILLAGE OF BEITA HAS BECOME a symbol of all that is tragic in Israel's Occupied Territories. The recent killings in Beita, and the government-ordered destruction in their aftermath, are testimony to the dangerous power wielded by extremists on both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and to the routine way tragedy is twisted here into moral ammunition for more violence.

Just outside Beita on April 6, local Palestinians crossed paths with a group of teen-agers who had hiked from the nearby Jewish settle-

MIDEAST

ment of Elon Moreh. The real beginnings of the confrontation are murky. But when the groups finished with each other, two Palestinians were dead and 15-year-old Tirza Porat had become the first Israeli civilian fatality since the Palestinian uprising began four months ago.

In the following days the Israeli army avenged Porat's death by razing the homes of 13 villagers initially accused of attacking the hikers. At the same time, Jewish settler groups called for the establishment of a new West Bank town bearing Porat's name.

A mistake: But as hysteria subsided and facts trickled in, it became almost certain that the three dead all were killed—Porat accidentally—by the hikers' own bodyguard. Now in critical condition, with wounds he suffered during the incident, the guard was one of two armed adults enlisted by the youths' parents to guide the teens' exploration of the nature surrounding Beita—an area that for months has been teeming with violence.

Despite evidence the girl's death was a mistake, right-wing settler factions have adopted Porat's memory for use in their mission to expand Israel's borders. There is fear among Palestinians and Israelis that the right's machinations are becoming an increasing threat to both Israel's security and the rights of its Palestinian inhabitants.

According to the *Jerusalem Post*, Chief of General Staff Dan Shomron has hinted that destruction of the 13 homes was ordered to avert a show of vengeance by settlers. If not for the army's action, he implied, "settlers might have taken the law into their own hands," the paper said.

What Shomron hinted at, an Arab spokesman living in the territory stated outright. "You know who rules the West Bank?" asked a West Bank Palestinian who requested anonymity. "Not the army and not the government. It's the settlers. It's easier for us to deal with the army than with the settlers."

The Arab citizens of Israel living inside the "green line"—the border that divides Israel proper from the Occupied Territories—are more free to speak openly than those living in the West Bank and Gaza. Among them, events at Beita are being viewed as a combined case of child neglect by the hikers' parents and the army's buckling to right-wing pressure. They believe the government finds it easier to "deal" with the Palestinians than to face threats and criticism from settler factions.

A dangerous playground: "Nobody with any common sense would take his children into a battlefield," said Nimr Murkos, head of the village council in the Israeli-Arab town of Kfar Yasif. Elon Moreh, the settlement where Porat lived, had failed to obtain government permission for the hike or to



Palestinian women mourn at a funeral of a man killed by Jewish settlers. At least 130 Palestinians have died in the Occupied Territories' uprising.

Right-wing settlers determine policy in Occupied Territories

request army protection for the youths, both routine procedures. The bodyguards who did accompany the hikers were not equipped with proper walkie-talkies and it has emerged that both of the men had stormy and violent pasts.

It was in fact Beita villagers who aided the youths after the confrontation by calling for medical help and attempting to resuscitate Porat when she was shot. The local media has reported that one of the bulldozed homes belonged to a man who actually summoned ambulances and kept a mob of villagers from the teens while they awaited help. Reportedly, the army has apologized and offered compensation for the lost home.

None of this has altered the stance of Elon Moreh settlers, including the surviving hikers. They continue to maintain that Beita villagers murdered Porat. "There is an astonishing discrepancy between the reality and the findings of the IDF (Israel Defense Force) investigation," said Benny Katzover, a settler leader who heads the Samaria Regional Council and whose daughter was among the hikers.

Katzover was referring to the Beita investigation being coordinated by the IDF. Shomron, the chief of general staff, responded to criticism of the probe by saying, "I hope and pray we don't have to resort to a polygraph test for the surviving hikers." The forensic evidence, he said, flatly contradicts their version of the story.

Right-wing pressure: Since the beginning of the uprising, in which at least 130 Palestinians and an Israeli soldier have died, settler groups like the Samaria Regional Council have regularly accused the army of being too restrained in dealing with the protesters, and have occasionally made good on threats to mete out their own version of justice.

This right-wing pressure has contributed

not only to the hasty actions at Beita, but has also played a large part in the government's latest attempts to deport Palestinians said to be key leaders of the uprising.

"We're caught between right-wing pressure to expel and international pressure not to expel," said one government official. Because of the factionalized state of Israel's

National Unity Government, hysteria surrounding incidents like Beita tends to seize control of the country and lead to accession to extremist pressure.

"So we expel," he said. "We knock down houses. That's life."

Denise Rinaldo is on assignment in Israel and the Occupied Territories for *In These Times*.

South Africa reaches to France to assassinate foe

By Diana Johnstone

PARIS

THE SHOTS WERE FIRED FROM SOUTH Africa. The body fell in France. Like a rock falling in a murky pond. The murder of Dulcie September was a historic event in two overlapping political contexts, South African and French. It was

APARTHEID

the first time a representative of the African National Congress (ANC) was assassinated in Europe. The 53-year-old native of Cape Town was shot in the back of the head as she turned the key in her office door in Paris on the morning of March 29. The unknown killer used a silencer. Police called the job "professional."

The South African context was clear enough. For more than a decade, South Africa has sent commandos to murder exiled anti-apartheid leaders in neighboring African countries (see *In These Times*, April 13). South African Defense Minister Magnus Malan boasts that ANC "terrorists" can be struck down anywhere in the world. In recent



Dulcie September

months, as the press blackout helps Europeans forget about apartheid, Pretoria's death squads have been fanning out beyond Africa. Last year British police arrested, then released, four South African agents who were allegedly preparing to kidnap ANC leaders. In February the ANC representative in Brussels narrowly escaped being gunned down.

All her friends said that September was frightened, that she had been receiving insulting letters and death threats, that she

Continued on page 22

IN THESE TIMES APRIL 20-26, 1988 11

A wall, a war and a wasteland: the fight for the Western Sahara

Western Sahara is a former Spanish colony on Africa's northern Atlantic coast between Morocco and Mauritania. When Spain withdrew from the region in 1975-76 it divided the mineral-rich territory in a dubious pact between the two neighboring countries. The agreement violated rulings of the International Court of Justice and standard United Nations procedures for decolonization, which would have allowed the local population to vote for the establishment of an independent nation.

The indigenous Polisario Front, first organized to wrest independence from Spain, turned its fight against the Mauritanian and Moroccan armies, forcing Mauritania out of the conflict in 1979. Since then, Morocco and Polisario have been locked in a stalemated desert war in which more than 10,000 have been killed to date.

Though the U.S. has been one of Morocco's chief backers, the war is rarely reported in this country. Writer Nelson Smith travelled to the front with the Polisario guerrillas last October.

By Nelson Smith

WESTERN SAHARA

WITH U.S. ARMS AND SUPPORT—AND with scarcely a mention in the U.S. media—Morocco's King Hassan II has gradually turned his 12-year-old occupation of Western Sahara into a bizarre physical impoundment.

Since 1980 Moroccan troops have extended a fortified wall across the desert territory, cutting it off from the resistance fighters of the Polisario Front and from some 165,000 West Saharan refugees in camps across the Algerian border. Amid continued fighting, a new section of the wall was completed last spring across the territory's southern boundary. The improbable bulwark is now, with all of its rubbly tributaries, an estimated 1,500 miles long—nearly as long as the Great Wall of China.

Though the wall has not ended the war, as Morocco claims, it has accomplished its immediate goal. Polisario's guerrilla forces have been slowly pushed into a desolate margin of land between the fortification and Western Sahara's eastern and southern borders with Algeria and Mauritania. With fighting held to this perimeter Morocco has begun to exploit the occupied land's resources. Western Sahara's primary resource, its rich phosphate mines at Bou Craa—once crippled by Polisario attacks—are back in operation, adding to Morocco's near monopoly on world phosphate exports. The latest addition to the wall has cut off Polisario from the coast where their raids had disrupted commercial fishing in Western Saharan waters. And all the while, Moroccan settlers,

drawn south by financial incentives, continue to "Moroccanize" the circumvallated territory.

Fitful occupation: The wall strategy emerged from something of a low point in Hassan's invasion of his southern neighbor. When Spain ended its colonial rule of Western Sahara in 1975, there seemed to be little—aside from the quixotisms of international law—to deter Morocco's longstanding claims to the territory. When the International Court of Justice ruled against those claims, Hassan promptly took matters into his own hands. Against sporadic resistance, Moroccan settlers and troops advanced south, to begin a fitful occupation that has sent thousands of native West Saharans or "Saharawi" fleeing across the border into Algeria.

By 1979, however, Hassan's adventure was turning costly. Polisario (a Spanish acronym for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el-Hamra and Rio de Oro) had grown from a few Saharawi students and nomads with trucks, camels and hand-me-down rifles into a modern liberation movement backed by an Algerian government wary of Morocco's appetites. Armed with Kalashnikov assault rifles, jeep-mounted artillery and a superior knowledge of the desert terrain, Polisario waged an effective, hard-hitting guerrilla war against the larger but uninspired Moroccan forces.

Polisario made comparable gains on the diplomatic front. Its government in exile—a provisional Islamic socialism based in the Saharawi refugee camps south of Tindouf, Algeria—was recognized by 50 countries (the number has since grown to 71). The U.N. and the Organization of African Unity supported its demands for a referendum on

Western Saharan independence. And though neither superpower had much interest in Western Sahara, the general sentiment against Morocco's land grab even stirred the Carter administration to curb some weapons sales to the traditional U.S. client.

As Morocco's diplomatic and military reversals mounted through 1979, Western Sahara seemed to be slipping from Hassan's control like sand gripped in a fist.

In 1980, however, two factors began to reshape the war: the growth of the wall and a symbiotic growth of U.S. military support. One of the first indications of a wall strategy was Morocco's purchase in 1979 of a \$200 million Northrop "intrusion detection system," which was later installed in the first section of the wall erected in 1980-82 around Western Sahara's main town of El Ayoun and the Bou Craa phosphate mines. With beefed-up air and ground units protecting construction work, subsequent sections advanced outward and south—a slowly uncurling tentacle of bulldozed rubble, mud-brick garrisons, barbed wire, land mines and artillery—finally enclosing the southern coastal town of Gueruerat last May. Though the wall has clearly changed the nature of the conflict, its final effect is—like many things in the Sahara—difficult to measure.

At the wall: Viewed through binoculars from a Polisario lookout, the wall is a thin pottery-colored line shimmering on the desert horizon. Occasionally the distant speck of a Moroccan helmet appears. Now and then there is a puff of smoke and a thud as one of Morocco's 155 mm guns heaves its load into the desert at a glimmer of light, a curl of dust—Polisario movements real or imagined. Unable to prevent the wall's construction, the guerrillas have kept it under

constant harassment and surveillance.

Their knowledge of it is thoroughly operational, as was demonstrated to this reporter and a BBC journalist in a night infiltration of the wall some 200 meters from a Moroccan base. (Over the last year Polisario has made something of a regular program of lobbing nervous journalists over the "impenetrable" wall like rounds of PR artillery.) Along much of the wall they have stripped away detection devices and barbed wire and actually moved hundreds of Moroccan land mines back to the other side. There were reports that, to Morocco's horror, a Saudi prince was badly wounded by one of the transplanted mines while touring the front last February.

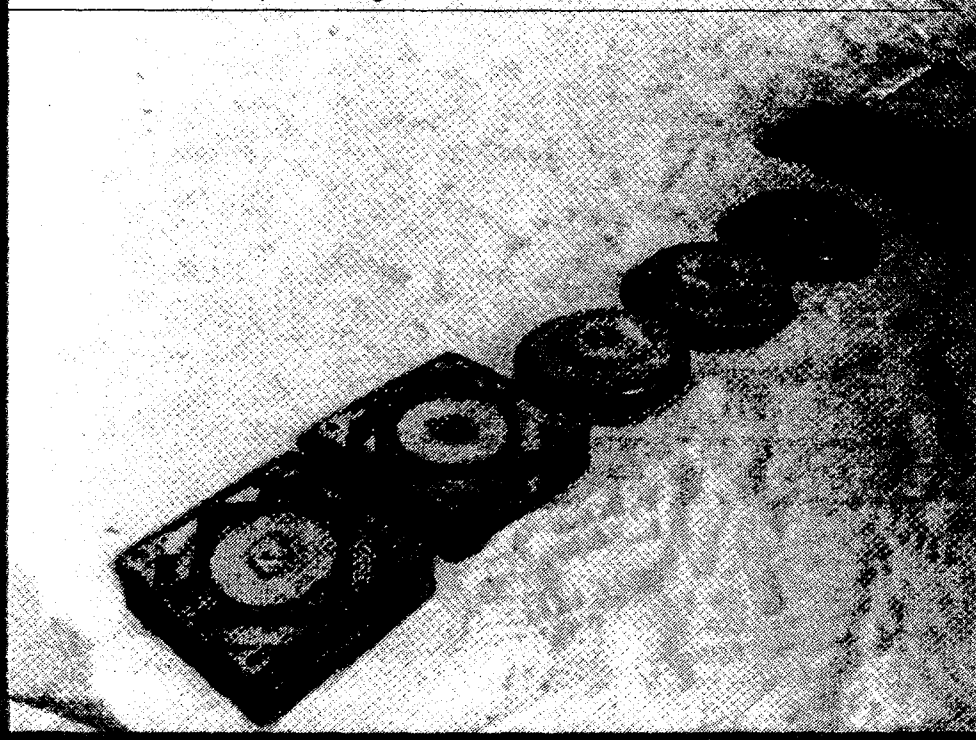
Larger attacks are usually made on moonless nights or during dust storms, with the guerrillas circling around behind Moroccan garrisons. There were about 20 major assaults last year, the most recent and fiercest being two battles on November 18 in the Farsia and Oum Dreiga regions, with Polisario claiming more than 300 Moroccan dead and wounded and the Moroccans claiming 75 of their own casualties and more than 200 Polisario killed.

Military victory, however, is not Polisario's goal. Its present strategy—born of both logic and necessity—is to keep the wall on costly alert, draining away Morocco's resources and morale. To the rebels the wall represents, like some basic engineering principle, a fatal overextension of empire that will lead inevitably to King Hassan's collapse. "Even if we never fired a shot," says a member of the Polisario leadership, "the wall would crumble."

The wall is estimated to cost Morocco more than \$2 million a day and requires the backing of some 150,000 troops, a conscript-bloated force stewing in the desert. The engine behind this war effort is an economy straining to reduce its foreign debt of some \$14.6 billion, nearly equal to its GNP. There is unemployment or severe underemployment among a quarter of Morocco's workforce. Depressed phosphate prices, low capital investment, and poor grain harvests have added to the pinch. An August 3 cable from the U.S. Embassy in Rabat ends a list of Morocco's economic woes with the note, "It seems thus that Morocco will achieve a lower rate of growth, with all that implies for social stability and resistance to continuing austerity." Add to this an extravagant royalty and one has the classic preface to debacle.

Yet in wars of attrition, it is the supply lines that count. Aside from humanitarian aid to the refugee camps, Polisario depends almost entirely on Algerian sanctuary and support. (Though the *New York Times*, among other sources, still credits Polisario with "Libyan backing," that limited aid ended even before Libya's Col. Muammar Khadafi and Hassan signed an accord in 1984.)

Land mines removed by Polisario guerrillas from the wall.



Algeria's support for Polisario is both ideological and a practical measure against Morocco's various and grandiose territorial claims.

There has been speculation that the decline in Algeria's oil income and the increasing political pragmatism of the Chadli Bendjedid government might move Algeria toward concessions on Western Sahara, which Polisario would have little choice but to accept. A meeting between Hassan and President Bendjedid in May 1987 has opened some regular, high-level talks between the two rival countries. But so far, Algeria continues to insist that Hassan negotiate directly with Polisario. Meanwhile, Algeria's material aid to Polisario appears to remain steady, if necessarily frugal.

The arms flow in: Morocco, on the other hand, enjoys lavish sponsorship from several major powers—enough to make the relatively unaffluent country Africa's third-largest weapons buyer, outspent only by South Africa and Libya. In straight cash, Saudi Arabia leads with a throne-to-throne flow of funds estimated at \$260 million per year. The U.S. has passed France as the second largest sponsor and the leading supplier of weapons. Throughout the war U.S. support has been a critical factor, both in its substance and its timing. Arms sales agreements to Morocco jumped from \$8.2 million in 1974 to \$242 million in 1975, just as Morocco began its invasion of Western Sahara. In 1980 a second surge of U.S. support coincided with first construction of the wall.

It was the fall of the shah of Iran in 1979 that spurred the Carter administration to lift its brief curb on weapons sales to King Hassan, whom virtually everyone saw as Shah II. Arms sales agreements went from a low of \$3.6 million in 1979 to a record \$274.4 million for 1980. Then, like so many other rulers with martial needs, Hassan hit the jackpot with Ronald Reagan's election. The new administration began prompt, unquibbling delivery of approved weapons, while a stream of high officials flew to Rabat and stood tall beside the king. Previous restrictions on use of weapons in Western Sahara were dropped. All U.S. diplomatic contacts with Polisario were also dropped.

Direct military aid (credits and grants, as opposed to sales) has grown to some \$400 million since Reagan took office, more than twice the amount for the previous seven-year period. A record \$50 million in military grants is requested for 1988. There has also been a large increase in field training, including a team of 25 counterinsurgency advisers dispatched to Morocco in 1982.

While arms sales haven't matched the 1980 spurt, they have been steady and growing. Most notably, the Reagan administration got approval February 1987 for a \$68 million sale of 100 M-48A5 tanks presumably paid

for with Saudi funds. The administration has also voiced its willingness to sell F-16 fighters to Morocco whenever the cash is ready.

A king in the hand: The policy behind the weapons is a slovenly thing. In theory the U.S. still recognizes Western Sahara's right to self-determination, along with all the standards for decolonization that right represents. But in practice U.S. arms supplied for Morocco's "defensive needs" help sustain a land grab widely denounced by the world community.

These contradictions are gathered under the ready principle that a king in the hand is better than whatever's in the bush. Hassan offers the U.S. a "moderating influence" in the region, as well as the practical benefits of reserved parking for the U.S. Rapid Deployment Force. A netherside of the U.S. policy is illustrated by the sale of the M-48A5 tanks. That U.S. military products can be purchased with Saudi money and tested in crunching up an obscure country is undoubtedly one of the conveniences of this species of small, no-win war.

Total U.S. military aid and sales to Morocco have grown to well over \$1 billion since the beginning of Hassan's invasion. This is in addition to another billion or so in economic aid. Though the U.S. support is intend-

ed to prop up Hassan, that result is by no means certain. Observers ranging on the political spectrum from Andrew Young to the Heritage Foundation have suggested that the U.S. may be abetting the ambitious monarch in his own ruin. A September 1987 letter to the State Department from several members of Congress sums up the general criticism of U.S. policy in Western Sahara. The letter protests the recent sale as furthering a policy that will "...encourage the wasting of Moroccan resources in an unwinnable war, with its associated risks of economic deterioration and instability."

The letter also notes that the sale could "...unintentionally encourage a less flexible attitude on the part of Morocco..." a somewhat belated observation. With the wall, Hassan's ambitions seem literally cast in stone. Withdrawal of such a highly publicized and expensive national project and the recall of an overgrown army—an army that has spawned coup attempts in the past—would be a grave political risk. Yet the occupation can only continue to be costly and precarious. Hassan's own wall—along with U.S. assurances and support—seems to have placed the king in the Humpty Dumpty position.

The search for a diplomatic breakthrough in the 12-year-old conflict has seen some

renewed effort recently. This is in part attributable to the wall's last extension, which raised regional tensions by its proximity to the Mauritanian border and, no doubt, added a further sense of closure to the impasse. U.N. Secretary-General Pérez de Cuellar dispatched a technical mission to the area last November, the first such mission to Western Sahara since 1975. The U.N. team spent three weeks touring both sides of the wall, but has not yet issued a public report.

The secretary-general has announced plans to follow up with a personal visit to both the Polisario and Moroccan camps in the coming weeks. With no final military solution possible, Morocco would hope to persuade the U.N. that the Western Saharans favor annexation rather than independence. Clearly, that can only be determined by fair referendum of Western Sahara's population, a dignity precluded—as the U.N. has consistently noted—by the presence of some 150,000 Moroccan troops and the exclusion of a like number of Saharawi refugees. Despite the U.N.'s initiatives, it is unlikely that an end to this slow, obscure war is near. In any conflict it is a difficult task to construct and sustain negotiations, and far more difficult when one is busy constructing and sustaining walls. □

Nelson Smith is a New York-based writer.



A Polisario fighter at the Moroccan-built wall that stretches some 1,500 miles across the Western Sahara.

THE WAR ON DRUGS



A modest proposal to end narcotics epidemic

In These Times has been reporting on government-sanctioned cocaine smuggling by Nicaraguan contra supporters since December 1986, when our lead story asked "Is North network cocaine connected?" Since then, while the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and other major media outlets ignored administration tolerance of drug smuggling, we kept at it. Among other things, we pointed out that the administration's efforts to circumvent the law had led it to rely on drug money to finance its war against Nicaragua in a manner similar to the CIA's smuggling of heroin in the '60s to pay for the secret wars in Laos and Cambodia.

Finally—last week—the *New York Times*, in a full-page story, discovered that "U.S. Security Interests Thwart War on the Narcotics Trade." The administration's "preoccupation with the contra war," the *Times* wrote, has contributed to a "lack of urgency" in the war on drugs. In both Honduras and Panama, it reported, strong evidence of cocaine trafficking was ignored by the Reagan administration. But even though Sen. John Kerry (D-MA) insists that "there is a network of drug trafficking through the contras" that "goes right up to Mario Calero, Adolfo Calero and Enrique Bermudez," and that he "can produce specific law-enforcement officials who will tell you that they have been called off drug investigations because the CIA is involved," the story concluded that "no solid evidence has been found to document that the main contra group, led by Adolfo Calero, financed the war with drug profits."

Showcasing: In fact, the evidence that U.S. officials closed their eyes to the contras' drug shipments into this country as a way of paying for their war grows daily. Administration officials put on a great show of diligence in the "war against drugs," most recently with the arrest in Honduras of Medellin drug cartel member Juan Ramon Matta Ballesteros (see story on page 3) and Attorney General Edwin Meese's recent week-long tour of Latin America. But these showcase exercises don't wash.

As Rep. Charles B. Rangle (D-NY) charges, administration officials "don't want to talk [to Congress] about drugs. They want to talk about arms and communists and terrorists." But, Rangle adds, "com-

munists aren't killing our kids. Drugs and drug traffickers are." And Rangle is more in tune than the administration with the wishes of the American people. A *New York Times*/CBS News poll last week found that by a margin of 63-21 percent, Americans thought it more important to put a stop to drug dealing than to support anti-Communist regimes in Central America.

Drugs are a serious social problem, but as the Indochina war and the wars in Central America made clear, drug trafficking is so lucrative that it is virtually impossible to control, especially when the interests of the drug runners and covert government operators coincide. The upsurge in cocaine traffic in recent years has created an industry that generates an estimated \$60 billion-\$120 billion a year in the U.S. And it has led to more widespread corruption within the American criminal justice system than at any time since Prohibition.

Yet the experts agree that drug abuse is not a raging epidemic, and that the number of addicts—some 3 million—is much less than the number of alcoholics. In 1984, for example, tobacco consumption was responsible for 320,000 deaths in the U.S., while alcohol contributed to 10 percent of all work-related injuries, 40 percent of all suicides and another 40 percent of highway deaths. The National Council on Alcoholism says that the total number of deaths attributed to all illicit drugs that year combined was only 3,500.

Meanwhile, an estimated \$8 billion a year is being spent by government at various levels to combat drugs. A bill now before Congress would allocate \$2.4 billion in federal money to beef up administration anti-drug activity, and local enforcement efforts are being increased everywhere.

Beyond "just say no": The tragedy of drug abuse, especially in the inner cities, is real. But it should be separated from the enormous criminal machine that has developed to supply illicit drugs. Telling a young person to "just say no" is pointless when he can make \$5,000 a day as a pusher. If these same drugs were decriminalized and regulated by law in the same way alcohol and tobacco are, the motive for the drug trade would disappear and our efforts could be shifted to the real problems of addiction. If that happened, the enormous cost to fight drugs, the corruption of our officials and drug-related violence on our streets could be ended. Then as Hugh Downs suggested on ABC News last week, the next time American intelligence agents decide to wage a war, they might have to go to Congress—instead of the drug barons—to get the money.

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(ISSN 0160-5992)

Published 41 times a year: weekly except the first week of January, first week of March, last week of November, last week of December; bi-weekly in June through the first week in September by Institute for Public Affairs, 1300 W. Belmont, Chicago, IL 60657, (312) 472-5700

Member: Alternative Press Syndicate

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This issue (Vol. 12, No. 21) published April 20, 1988, for newsstand sales April 20-26, 1988.



By Salim Muwakkil

Martin Luther King's legacy withstands test of time

EVEN BEFORE AN ASSASSIN'S BULLET felled Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. 20 years ago, the need for his style of leadership was already dying.

A singular, sainted leader may ring some bells with the disenfranchised castes, but when a group gains a secure identity and some measure of social empowerment it seldom has a need for such figures.

King's civil rights victories spurred a growing sense of power among black Americans and allowed them access to sectors of society from which other kinds of black leadership could emerge:

- The passage of civil rights legislations in the mid-'60s greased the way for a proliferation of black elected officials, their administrative aides and appointees;

- Aggressive recruitment and affirmative-action strategies adopted during the King era added blacks (though far too few) to the ranks of corporate and academic America; and

- The nation's cultural media became more receptive to black contributions and perceptions.

Black leadership is no longer located exclusively in the pulpit or at the head of demonstrations, but is varied and multifaceted. Messiahs lose their jobs when their flocks lose their limitations, and King did more than most to reduce blacks' external limitations.

Gains and losses: During the period of social activity ushered in by the civil rights movement, some blacks made significant gains. In 1960, for example, only 38 percent of young black adults had a high school education, and by 1978 the figure was 81 percent. The proportion of blacks with incomes of \$30,000 or more is larger than it has ever been (in comparative dollars) and a solid black middle class has emerged.

But there's also been a simultaneous trend: median black income is only 57 percent of whites', just 2 percent higher than in 1964. What's more, the interracial class gap is also widening. The ranks of the so-called black underclass—an urban, poverty-stricken population—have grown dramatically. According to University of Chicago sociologist William J. Wilson, "In the 10 largest cities, the number of blacks in extreme poverty areas increased 104 percent between 1970 and 1980."

In a perverse sense, King can also be blamed for that. After all, he fought to kill the restrictive racial covenants that had previously confined the black working and middle classes to their inner-city neighborhoods. When residential segregation was outlawed, many relatively well-off blacks left for greener pastures. And, Wilson argues, their exodus increased the cultural and economic isolation of those left behind.

"I believe that the exodus of middle- and working-class families from many ghetto neighborhoods removes an important 'social buffer' that could deflect the full impact of the kind of prolonged and increasing joblessness that plagued inner-city neighborhoods in the '70s and early '80s," Wilson wrote in his widely-heralded book, *The Truly Disadvantaged*.

The inner cities were particularly vulnerable to the economic changes of the last two decades because black workers were concentrated in those industries that have been most severely affected by deindus-

trialization and the changes in the overall economy. Wilson argues for a restructuring of the country's industrial base to provide new jobs for those in the expanding underclass, and he says he believes King was beginning to focus more on such issues before he was assassinated.

While it has become fashionable in some circles to blame various Great Society programs for the increase of black poverty and its attendant ills (such as out-of-wedlock births, female-headed families, welfare dependency, joblessness, crime, academic underachievement and vandalism), Wilson's data reveals that the expansion of the underclass is a much more complicated story. An important part of that story, however, has been the growing estrangement of the black middle and working classes from their less-fortunate brethren.

King's legacy? The deterioration of the inner city is not generally considered a part of King's legacy, but according to some authorities it should be. Harold Cruse, professor emeritus at the University of Michigan, has condemned the entire civil rights movement for what he argues was its faulty emphasis on integration.

In his view, the notion that social equality and cultural assimilation are more important than black economic development is the primary reason blacks remained trapped at the bottom of the economic ladder. Cruse has been a consistent critic of integrationist strategies since his landmark 1967 book *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual*, and he steps up the attack with his latest book *Plural But Equal* (see *In These Times*, Feb. 3).

Cruse's argument that economic and cultural solidarity for blacks is the most pragmatic way to gain power in a society molded by ethnic pluralism reinforces his reputation as one of the country's most unpredictable black nationalists. His criticism of civil rights tactics avoids the mystical obscurantism usually offered by more ideological nationalists, yet his prescriptions are more exotic than the dry self-help nostrums of the nationalists-conservatives of the Booker T. Washington tradition (such as Robert Woodson, Tony Brown and Glenn Loury).

Still, Cruse's core argument against the civil rights strain of the black movement is virtually identical to those other nationalist variants: integration is irrelevant to black progress and a dependence on governmen-



tal largesse has devitalized the black community. Together with the newly empowered conservatives, nationalists have been successfully making that argument for the last decade or so. But the times are changing, and new information is proving them wrong.

New data: In addition to Wilson's path-breaking scholarship, a welter of new research is revealing that contemporary criticisms of the social spending programs of the '60s and '70s were way off base. Rather than encouraging dependence and sociopathic behavior, as its many detractors claimed, the programs offered crucial assistance to those ravaged by wrenching economic shifts.

A new study by John Schwarz, a professor of political science at the University of Arizona, is another in a lengthening line that counters the conventional wisdom of the Reagan era. Entitled *Americans' Hidden Success*, the study argues that the anti-pov-

erty and public-assistance programs of the '60s and '70s had "a positive effect in reducing poverty at a time when the addition of nearly 30 million Baby-Boom workers created an era of surplus labor," Schwarz writes.

"Even during the economically flaccid '70s, the American economy outperformed the record of the '50s and the '80s. But since the 'Reagan revolution,' our economy's growth rates have actually slowed, poverty has increased and America has fallen disastrously in debt to foreign nations as well as future generations of our own citizens."

While this new study documents the gains made by the poorest citizens during a period of increased social spending—"between 1965 and 1979, the proportion of Americans living in poverty declined from 13 percent to 6.8 percent..."—it also emphasizes the benefits to society at large. "A little history helps us to understand that social programs do work," writes Schwarz, "and cutting social spending hurts us all."

Two decades after his death, King's urgings to increase investments in human capital are being echoed in the most unlikely places. The April edition of the Dow Jones & Company's *American Demographics* contains an article that links the well-being of black America to a consumer windfall for American corporations.

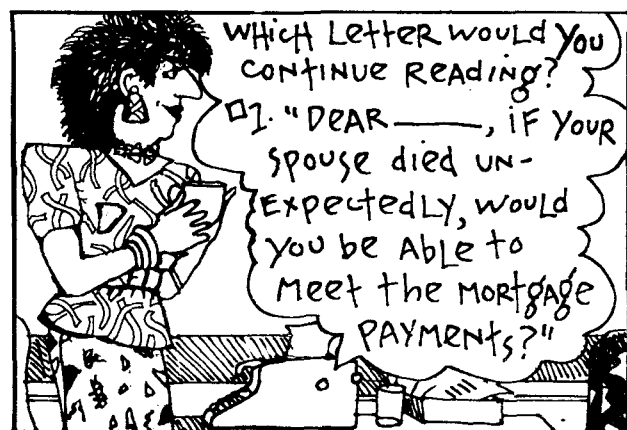
"If reality could be altered—if black households and incomes matched those of all Americans, there would be more than a \$100 billion increase in the personal income of Americans, a 3 percent increase in the nation's GNP, and a consumer market that stirs the imagination," writes George Sternlieb and James Hughes. "The windfall would be roughly equivalent to the total GNP of countries like Switzerland, Belgium or Sweden."

When the voices of raw capitalism begin echoing Great Society rhetoric, there's evidence of a shifting current. "As the black share of the population grows, the burden of black economic deprivation becomes increasingly significant," Sternlieb and Hughes continue. "The high price of being black in the U.S. is paid by all of society."

What's more, they add, there are enormous benefits to all Americans if black incomes matched those of Americans in general. "Put another way, the American economy will lose \$111 billion annually by 1995 because of the fragmentation of black households and their lower household incomes.... American marketers have a vital interest in the economic prospects of blacks. Black economic progress makes business sense." King couldn't have agreed more.

Two decades after King's death, his urgings to increase investment in human capital are being echoed in the most unlikely of places.

SYLVIA



by Nicole Hollander

VIEWPOINTS



The mainstream media finally has been forced to acknowledge Jesse Jackson's popular appeal, but it still manages to denigrate his campaign.

By Susan J. Douglas

IT'S NO SECRET TO *IN THESE TIMES* READERS that mainstream coverage of Jesse Jackson's campaign has provided striking evidence of how institutional racism within the dominant media has marginalized Jackson as a candidate. At first, Jackson was cast as an also-ran, way in back of the pack, lurking in the shadows. By Super Tuesday, the news frame had changed, and bold headlines loudly but nervously asked "What Does Jesse Want?" After Michigan, the press wasn't sure what to say or ask, as epitomized by the recent two-inch headline on the cover of *Time* that reads, simply, "Jesse!"

As I read the *Time* article, it finally hit me what the subtext of the Jackson cover-

Time does Jackson in with subliminal message

age has been, and why I have found it so disturbing. It's not just that Jackson has been consistently cast as a "threat"; he's a very particular kind of threat. He's going to demand something from white people (up-pity you-know-what); he overexcites his followers (voodoo priest); and, worst of all, he might get inside the Big House (lock up the silver and the white women!). For underneath the so-called political analysis of Jackson, the coverage that insistently congratulates itself for being "objective" and

race blind, is a discourse that has nothing to do with politics, but instead draws from *Birth of a Nation*, *Mandingo*, *The Emperor Jones*, *Shaft* and *Superfly*. This discourse, which has infected American life for more than 200 years, is guided by the question "What terrifying things will happen when a black man, (all of whom have something very big and irresistible in their pants) gets some power and is let loose in the public sphere?" If you think I've lost it, and that age-old stereotypes and fears about black sexuality *aren't* informing coverage of Jackson, just pick up the April 11 issue of *Time* and have a look at "Taking Jackson Seriously."

Throughout the piece, the word "passion" recurs over and over. We are reminded not once, but twice, that Jackson is the "illegitimate son of a teen-age mother." Hmm, let's see if I get this subtext: like most black folks, his mother couldn't control it, and Jesse is programmed by the same lustful DNA, handed down through generations, therefore.... Jackson is possessed by the "powerful passions of a black preacher." Adjectives used to describe him include "provocative," "beguiling," "fiery" and "impetuous." As a candidate, Jackson "arouses Democratic passions." His relationship to his supporters is really a "love affair." But this is not some innocent, romantic puppy love: his devotees are consumed by a "fever." "Hundreds of supporters chased their champion down a dark street after nightfall." Jackson, "infused with a front-runner's frenzy" has "unleashed primordial Democratic passions."

Can you hear the drum beats in the jungle yet? If not, *Time* reminds you that Jackson is a "tree shaker." Can you see half-clad, sweaty bodies chanting and stomping around the tribal bonfire? You should, since Jackson "sparks a visceral response" in previously restrained citizens. Caution and

measured analysis are gone with the wind.

That old black magic: As he toured, (get *this* imagery!) crowds "mushroomed to unmanageable and chaotic size." Ooo-wee! His supporters, who "all but crushed Jackson at every stop," are described as "thrusting...begging...grasping...craving to be part of it all" as they chanted heatedly, repeatedly, passionately, "Jesse! Jesse! Jesse!" My God, should my pants be wet, should I be scared, or both!? And where does this leave that dull sexless white boy, Dukakis? Struggling with what *Time* calls "the passion gap," presumably with his wimp white weenie shrivelled up in his boxers. In fact, Jackson supporters see Dukakis and Gore as trying to "neuter the Democratic Party." And that's the last thing these newly aroused voters want. They know where the beef is this year; they want the meat and the motion, and they know who's got it: the candidate *Time* calls "Action Jackson."

In his article that purports to take Jackson seriously and to review his record and his proposals, sexual metaphors frame the man and his followers in such a way as to evoke a sense of chaos, dissolution and apprehension. Jackson is consistently allied with the emotional, the irrational and the libidinous. The story evokes WASP pathologies as it suggests that Jackson has castrated the white guys. He supposedly unleashes primordial forces that, in the age of AIDS and nuclear terror, threaten the restraint that will allegedly save our lives and our planet. In other words, all this talk of passion, arousal and fever subtly instructs the *Time* reader to ask, "If Jesse's near the red button, might he come too soon?" It is, after all, in the area of foreign policy that Jackson's "radical agenda most explosively collides with conventional political norms."

The other equation that is made, then, is between licentiousness and left-wing politics. The man who arouses and is possessed by powerful passions is also "far to the left of conventional discourse." He is the type of man who "has been unable to resist the siren song of free-lunch economics." It is people like this, suggests the magazine, lax leftist libertines cast under a spell, who can't handle money and advocate "dangerously unworkable cuts in the military budget." What is conveniently forgotten is that it was an uptight right-wing white man who gave us "voodoo economics," or that, under Reaganism, what the press considers "conventional discourse" is quite a bit to the right of where it used to be.

Two codes, both of them telegraphing "Danger! Beware!" pulse together in "Taking Jackson Seriously." An image of the left as blindly gullible, susceptible to the "siren song" of financially profligate and unworkable political propositions, and stereotypes about Afro-Americans' alleged passions and contempt for restraint are personified, by *Time*, in "Jesse!" Jackson and his supporters are outside the realms of logic, cold analysis and rational calculation. They don't think about the morning after, about consequences; they just think about the "feel-good allure" of now. They don't want a balance sheet, they want that old black magic. And if they have their way, warns *Time*, round and round we'll go, down and down we'll go.

Susan J. Douglas writes frequently for *In These Times*.

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By Robert Claiborne

EVERY COUPLE OF YEARS (MOST RECENTLY, in early March), *In These Times* runs an article discussing whether the American socialist movement (if that's the right word) is "relevant." The question shouldn't have to be asked, and the fact that it keeps cropping up tells us something. I'm going to stick my neck out and answer it: *no*. American socialism is irrelevant (and deserves to be) because it either doesn't know what it wants, or—as with the "Marxist-Leninist" splinters—wants things that other Americans not only don't want but never will.

The Leninist sects base their political thinking on dogmas even less relevant to U.S. problems now than they were 50 years ago. Whatever this country needs, we're not going to find out what it is, or how to get it, by reading what Marx wrote in 1875, or Lenin in 1905, or Trotsky in 1935, or Mao in 1955. Their present-day disciples can argue till the cows come home about whether the Soviet Union (or China, or Cuba) is or isn't "socialist," but nobody else is listening.

I once had high hopes for the "new" socialist groups, but these hopes dropped sharply a few years ago, when I attended an all-day conference on "socialism and activism." The panel on socialism that I sat in on could be summed up as a group petition of involuntary intellectual bankruptcy.

The speakers represented just about every socialist trend, new or old, that I'd ever heard of, plus several that I hadn't. They argued about how to promote socialism, whether or not to work in the Democratic Party, how to work in the labor movement, and how a socialist party should be structured. That is, they talked, interminably, about how-to-do-it tactics. But on *what to do*—the political program that these tactics were supposed to implement—not a word. I mean literally.

After an hour of these irrelevancies came the question period, and I challenged the panelists directly. Look, I said, I'm a long-time left activist; I read *The Nation*, *The Progressive* and *In These Times*—I've even tried to read *Socialist Review*. I, of all people, ought to have been getting your message—and I haven't. Specifically, I haven't a clue to what this "socialism" is that you're touting. Will you please enlighten me?

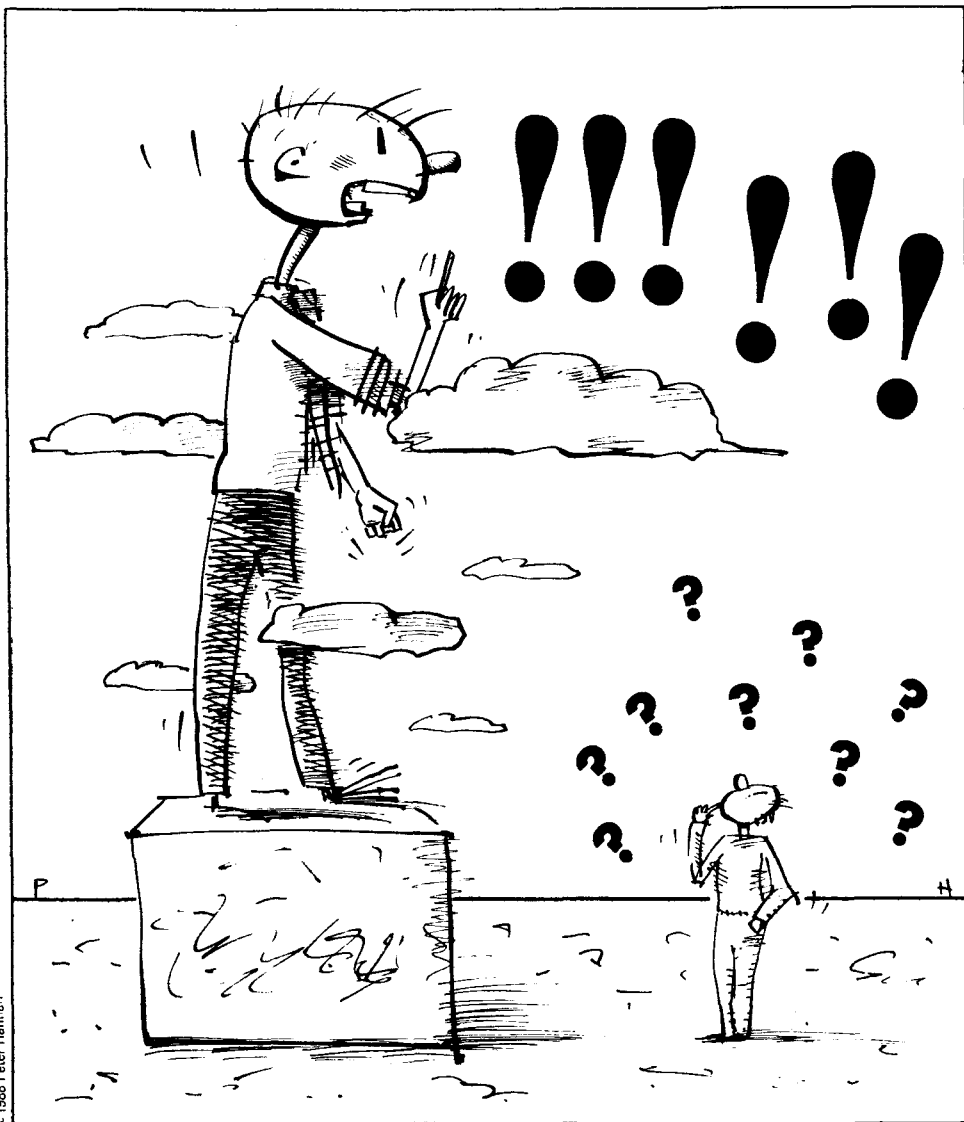
The invitation was declined: either they didn't know the answer or they weren't telling. Instead, they kept on wrangling about how to do it—whatever the hell "it" was.

A few weeks ago, I espied a long article by Michael Harrington, head of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), on why American socialism is relevant (*ITT*, Feb. 24). Aha, I thought! This is from the horse's mouth; now I'll find out what socialism means. Nope. What I got was a string of generalities about such issues as "democratizing the entire process of investment," "changing the distribution of power in the way decisions are made," and "national health insurance."

What's it all about, Alfie? Sounds nice—only what the hell does it all mean? Let's take a closer look.

"Democratizing" investment means taking the power to make investment and disinvestment decisions away from those who now have it and giving it to—whom? Who's going to wield that power—"the people,"

If socialism is relevant why do they keep asking?



some people, different groups of people for different decisions? And through what mechanisms, created by what sort of enabling legislation?

"Changing the distribution of power" raises much the same questions. Power isn't something you pass out on street corners like leaflets or free samples; it's embodied in legal systems, government bureaus and corporate boards. Meaning that if you propose to redistribute it, you've got to change those institutions. Well, good—but change them in what ways, and by what means? Without concrete answers to these questions, talk about "democratizing" and the rest of it is simply wind.

As for national health insurance: anyone who's studied U.S. health care (I have)

nationalized system, and (until the Thatcher government) Britain's National Health.

Spell it out: If there are ways of dealing with this problem—and I think there are—then socialists and anyone else seeking to improve U.S. health care have got to spell them out, and demand that they be embodied in health-insurance legislation. Otherwise its costs will be insupportable—as those of private health insurance are rapidly becoming. Even under socialism, there are no free lunches.

There's nothing wrong with the things the "new" socialists want, but without specifics they're no more than pious hopes. And even as such, they're still no more than any radical democrat wants; they don't add

up to "socialism." Or maybe they do—damned if I know! Perhaps DSA and the other socialist mini-groups have some vision of the future, some non-impressionist picture of the kind of country they'd like to see 20 or 30 or 50 years from now. But if they do, they've kept it a close-held secret.

Do they want a "nationalized" economy, and if so, what does that mean? Or a "mixed" economy—and what does *that* mean? Talk of "moral reformation" is all very fine, but it's not the foundation for a political movement. As Saul Alinsky pointed out years ago, politics is about power—meaning that socialist politics is about the power to make economic decisions. And unless you explain who gets the power, and how they get it, you're not talking politics, socialist or any other kind.

Marx and Engels long ago criticized the "utopian" socialists of their day on precisely this point: they knew what they wanted, but proposed to get it by moral reformation, not changing the power structure. At that, they were in better shape than our modern utopians, who on the evidence don't even know what they want.

One more personal note. I've been active for most of the past 50 years; I've paid my dues and am still paying them, as a union leader. Yet for some 10 years, I've received not a single mailing, leaflet or other communication from *any* socialist group. All I know about them is what I read in the papers: the annual report, in *In These Times* and/or *The Nation*, on what happened at the DSA's annual convention—followed, inevitably, by a spate of letters complaining that the convention's decisions were misreported. To me, every word of these dreary wrangles is pure waste: neither the articles nor the complaints tell me anything I need to know.

I've been committed to social change all my adult life; in my own modest way, I'm still working at it. If "socialism," as now defined (or undefined) by American socialists, is irrelevant to me—and it sure as hell is—then who *is* it relevant to?

No movement for change, of any kind, can achieve relevance without a concrete program describing where it wants to go and how it expects to get there. So, my well-meaning brothers and sisters of the socialist movement, I wish you well—but until you come up with that kind of program, don't call me. Nor will I call you—because, like Rhett Butler, frankly I don't give a damn.

Robert Claiborne is a freelance writer and an official of the National Writers Union.

No movement for social change can achieve relevance without a concrete idea of where it wants to go and how it wants to get there.

knows that a major problem is how to stop the steady escalation in its costs. This has been going on for more than 20 years, as *the direct result* of our first stab at a national health program, Medicare and Medicaid. It has also been going on in the very different institutional frameworks of Sweden's

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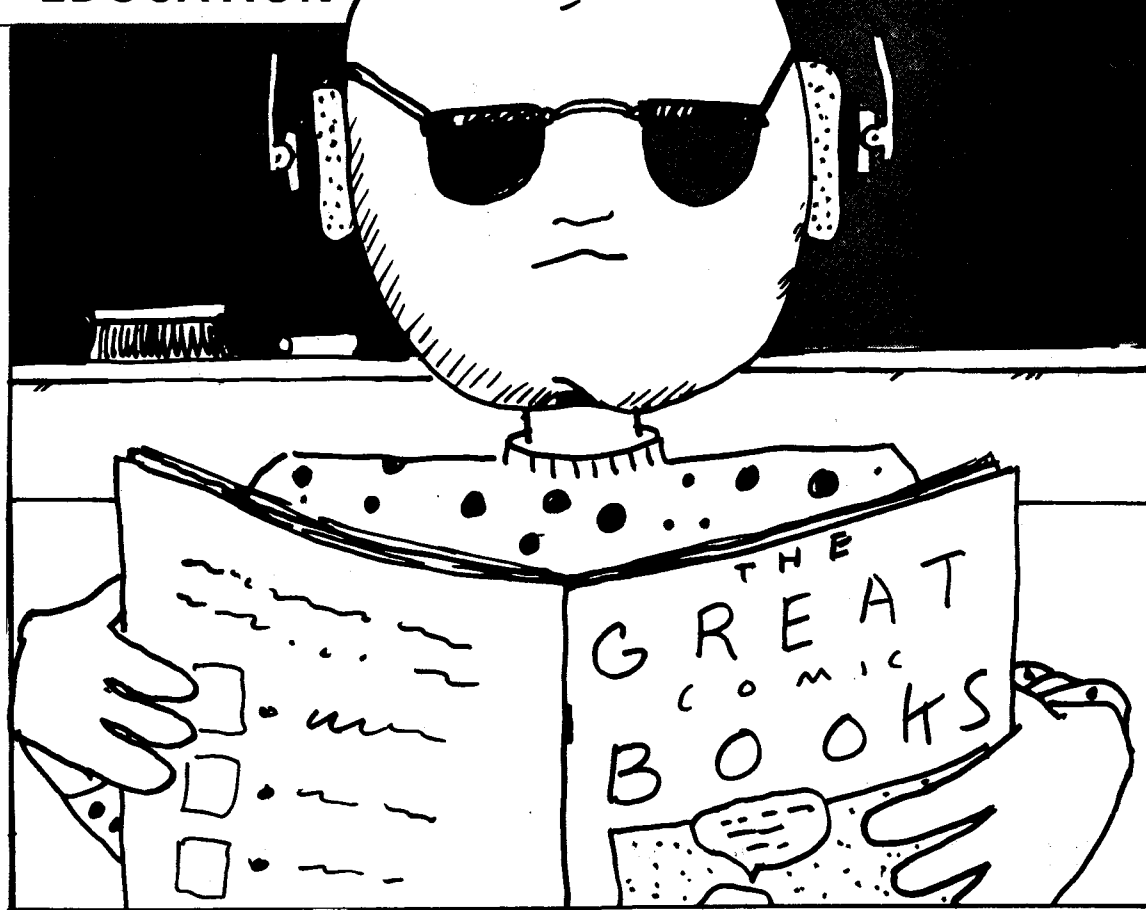
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**Professing Literature:
An Institutional History**
By Gerald Graff
University of Chicago Press
315 pp., \$24.95

By William E. Cain

EDUCATION



Closed minds and the perils of professing literature

GERALD GRAFF'S *PROFESSING Literature* is a far more interesting and important book than either Allan Bloom's *The Closing of the American Mind* or E.D. Hirsch's *Cultural Literacy*. The superiority of Graff's study to its popular rivals is clear. It is more detailed, tolerant and thoughtful in its analyses and arguments, and its recommendations for educational reform are humane and "progressive." But one of the merits of *Professing Literature*—its refusal to make easy, and easily marketed, moral appeals—has so far prevented it from reaching audiences outside the academy.

Both Bloom and Hirsch say superficial, but vivid, things that encourage people to believe that the failures of American education are obvious and easy to fix. Unlike Bloom, Graff does not denounce the faculty, indict the students, stamp the '60s as the crucial period of ethical disintegration and educational collapse, or insist that a saving remnant might find its humanistic haven through rapt absorption in a few Great Books.

Nor does he echo Hirsch's view that the problem lies in an absence of information among students—a problem that Hirsch tells us could be remedied by filling young minds (like computers) with millions of bits of decontextualized facts. *Professing Literature* cogently helps us see the marked shortcomings—and also the familiarity—of Bloom's and Hirsch's proposals.

Graff focuses upon the emergence and growth of literary studies in the U.S., beginning his account with the classical college of the early 19th century and closing it with an insightful treatment of today's burgeoning (if confused and conflicted) field of literary criticism and theory. Scholars will learn much from Graff, as he traces the origins and history of literary studies. But *Professing Literature* considers a wide range of cultural, social and political issues and, in this respect, it offers a good deal that will intrigue and stimulate non-specialist readers.

Dicey revisionism: Graff contends, for example, that it is misleading to urge that teachers and students embrace "tradition" and return to past educational methods. When conservatives lament the loss of a close attention to and rigorous interpretation of the classics, they are forgetting that this "close reading" approach was judged to be terribly radical when it first hit the academic scene in the '30s and '40s. Back then, it seemed to invite impressionism, with each reader locating his or her own array of meanings

in texts, or else it appeared certain to scant the luminous beauties and moral gems in the texts that students so industriously set out to explicate.

What is now naturalized as a traditional truth that we have sadly lost was, in fact, an educational trend that met fierce resistance. As Graff rightly maintains, we cannot reform education by looking backward to a past that never was, idealizing approaches and values that were, as the historical record shows, very much in dispute.

Graff makes another compelling point when he reviews the efforts at the University of Chicago in the '30s and Harvard in the '40s to install "Great Books" programs. The idea seemed so wonderfully attractive: highlight the masterworks of the West and guide the students toward the best that has been thought and said. But this apparently good idea failed at both universities, and—Bloom take heed—it would surely fail again, for it fatally assumed that the Great Books "teach themselves."

No matter how great the books are, they do not announce how we should read them. To read them profitably, we must think about interpretive methods, contexts and history. We need, in a word, to in-

volve ourselves in discussion of (and debate about) all of the difficult, competing interests that advocates of the Great Books and core-curriculum model find so troublesome and with which they want to dispense.

Myth of coherence: What is to be done? A good first step, Graff advises, would be to acknowledge the peculiar way that "conflict" is screened from students. The academy and media are filled with heated, often angry arguments about how education, especially in the humanities, should proceed, yet little of this actually enters into the curriculum or classroom.

It's as though we believe education can work only if we present a united front to the students. Faculty, administrators and legislators fight out matters of policy and then, once the dust has settled, students passively get handed the results. We fondly hope that education will at last prove "coherent" and effective, only to discover yet again that what seems coherent to some educators and students seems incomplete, inadequate and unfair to others.

Graff sees the problem as a relatively simple one, though it is one

that we keep trying to dodge or deny: America's faculty and students are too diverse in their backgrounds, needs and goals for any single model to succeed in providing a coherent education for everybody. If any model is to work, it must be based on highlighting and exploiting the inescapable fact of conflict and disagreement about educational aims.

Here Graff recalls his own experience as a student in the mid-'50s. He put together a solid-looking English major, yet found his work to be fragmented and unclear in its purposes. It was only years later that he realized the "intensity" of the debate about education, literary studies and critical methods that had been going on while he was a student. And it was precisely this debate about central issues

It's as though we believe education can work only if we present a united front to the students.

that "might have given my study the context that it lacked" and made it seem crucially a part of the political and cultural life of the society as a whole.

Educational "add ons": Graff notices something important about the structure of literary studies and, by implication, other departments in the college and university. When faculty face the challenge of a new theory or methodology, they do not reconceive and reorganize their discipline and curriculum, but, instead, "add on" the challenge itself.

By adding a feminist critic to their ranks and a few courses on women's literature, for instance, the members of a department can keep their curriculum up to date even as they feel free to ignore whatever the feminist critic might be doing in her teaching. Graff claims that we need to imagine how we might paradoxically but profitably make education coherent through foregrounding conflict—conflict like the one between feminist and other approaches to literature, conflict that is usually masked from students and consigned to department meetings and conversation in the cafeteria.

Team-taught courses, interdisciplinary curricula, programs in cultural studies—these exist in some institutions already, and they help point the way toward making disagreement and conflict seem not dangerous but inevitable, and therefore obviously central to a serious, honest approach to educational reform. What we have now, Graff observes, is "patterned isolation," a situation whereby each teacher meets privately with his or her students and rarely, if ever, articulates differences from (or agreements with) colleagues.

Unaware of the lively debates that might energize and connect their work in various courses, students have frequently struck their elders as lost and aimless and uninterested in their education. An Allan Bloom or E.D. Hirsch then appears with a resolutely toned answer to the present crisis, an answer that receives a wide hearing but that effects no real change because it assumes we can impose coherence on a diverse and often divided group of faculty and students.

We end up back where we started, waiting for the next militant spokesman for bracing discipline to arrive on the scene. By proposing in *Professing Literature* that we imagine how we might build our different views about educational theory and practice into the curriculum, rather than keeping it outside and away from the students, Graff points in a promising new direction. ■

William E. Cain is an associate professor of English and director of American studies at Wellesley College.

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Mechanic Accents: Dime Novels and Working-Class Culture in America

By Michael Denning
Verso, 259 pp., \$13.95

By Eric Lott

Dime novels, not dim novels: when the working class is the reading class

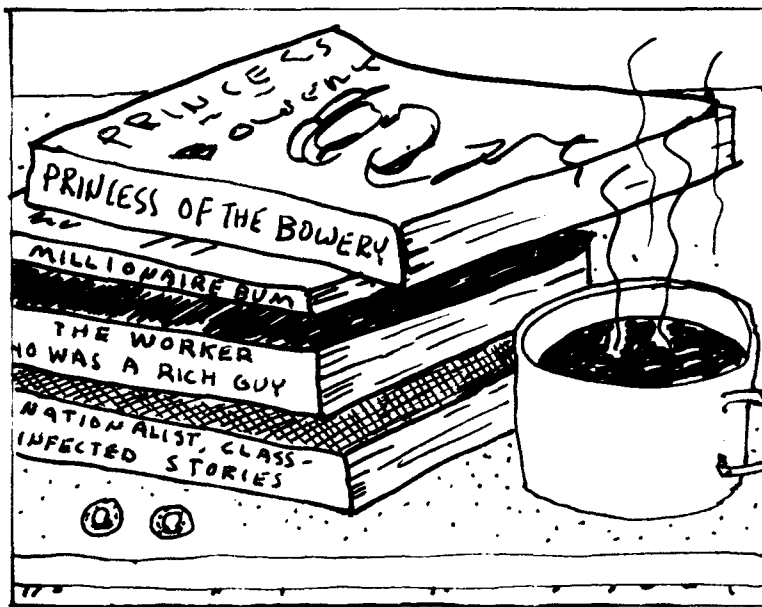
tle the old antinomies that have structured our understanding of popular and working-class culture. Following Gramsci's lead, Michael Denning's *Mechanic Accents*, a brilliant investigation of the place and practice of dime novels in 19th-century working-class life, moves well beyond the stale debates that pit

HISTORY

reading against barbarism (the reactionary version) or culture-industry domination against a "people's culture" (the left version). As Denning demonstrates, things have never been that simple or that clear.

Produced in "fiction factories" that relied on a strict division of labor (often even separating the conception of stories from their execution), dime novels of tramps and outlaws, honest mechanics and working girls came out of one of America's first real culture industries. And they were read largely by working-class readers, Denning argues, most of whose reading consisted of dime novels. Yet this didn't mean a simple transfer of factory relations to the sphere of leisure. The stories were in no sense the "class expression" of working people, but neither were they preemptive bourgeois fantasies of the good life.

These stories were imprinted with the values of those to whom they appealed; Gramsci says they at once took the place of and favored workers' imaginations. "Dime novels," Denning writes, "were neither the vehicle of workers' self-expression nor the propaganda tools of capitalists; they were a stage on which contradictory stories were



produced, with new characters in old costumes, morals that were undermined by the tale, and words that could be spoken in different accents"—representations alternately claimed, rejected and fought over.

Knights and ladies of labor: These stories have sometimes been taken as fables of conservatism. In them workingmen are revealed to be noblemen in disguise, and are restored to their "rightful place"; working women (actually heiresses) fight to preserve a seemingly genteel sense of virtue. But Denning's crucial emphasis on culture as a sphere of conflict re-accents them. The purpose of their mysterious figures and absurd conventions, he argues, was to enact social cleavages and conflicts.

Their narrative formulas in turn provided symbolic resolutions to the social contradictions they raised, and while historical pressures (strikes, depressions) at times revealed such resolutions to be indeed

imaginary, they were often useful and convincing. When, for example, the codes of genteel culture made virtuous working-class womanhood a contradiction in terms, a fictional fight to preserve it—missing from middle-class novels of the day—was a move of heroic agency. Workers in dime novels, in other words, became precisely knights and ladies of labor: imagined inheritors of a republic they had been denied.

Hence these stories, in the period of prolonged crisis, class conflict and labor organization provided a "terrain of struggle about class, about the lineaments of the 'characters' that made up the republic." They were a shared space in which the outlines and allegiances of working-class heroes could be collectively struggled over. These novels took many forms, from "mysteries of the city" to exploits of famous outlaws, from honest workers unjustly accused to millionaire tramps.

Stealing from thieves: But the

story they told again and again, says Denning, was a variant of the artisan republicanism recently explored by the new labor history: "nationalist, class-inflected stories of the American Republic, interrelated, if sometimes contradictory tales of its origins and the threats to it." And just as republicanism was differently accented in working-class ideologies, so story conventions could take on a utopian dimension—the final distribution of prizes, pensions and husbands in dime novel happy endings was, in Denning's phrase, "a redistribution, an expropriation of the expropriators."

Mechanic Accents is a signal contribution to debates in labor history, American literature, popular culture and Marxist theory. It is premised on a revisionist history of the 19th-century American novel and it vivifies current debates about the nature of the popular, all underwritten by Denning's commitment to a materialist conception of narrative and history. This also gives the book a currency that is absent from much academic writing. While it's true that the reading of the few still depends on capitalism's systematic "barbarization" of the many, there are limits and resistances to this equation that Denning clarifies.

Finally, his investigation of popular narrative conventions reveals the irony that novelists like Howells weren't as removed from "vulgar and commonplace people" as they thought. *Silas Lapham* itself is shot through with dime novel figures: a cross-class marriage, a princess incognito and, when Silas loses his house, a metaphorical tramp. These Denning forces us to see as figures of social division, unsuccessfully policed. ■

Eric Lott is a frequent contributor to *In These Times*.

Flying over a familiar landscape

The Pilot and the Passenger

By Leo Marx
Oxford University Press
357 pp., \$29.95

By Daniel Harris

Essentially, Marx has created a cottage industry out of one idea, and his work suffers as a result from staggering iterations. In its simplest

POLITICS

form, his major premise is that all classical American literature from *Walden* to *Huckleberry Finn* constitutes one long exhortation against capitalist industrialism, a form of novelistic invective fired by vague longings for the pastoral world of the colonialists. As stated in one of the collection's best essays, "The American Revolution and the American Landscape," conditions inherent in the terrain itself—the seeming limitlessness of its space, its freedom from history and tradition, and its promise of superabundance—gave

the colonialists both the symbolic topography and imaginative impetus for revolution.

And yet the same conditions that favored independence and radicalism were soon exploited for the purposes of industry and "progress." Thus, the genre of pastoral, arguably the most ersatz of literary forms, quickly became the dominant paradigm by which 19th-century American novelists criticized the unscrupulous acquisitiveness of their culture.

Hippie hazards: According to Marx, the pastoral agenda re-emerged—intact, unchanged—in the somewhat implausible form of New Left radicalism. Activism in the '60s, he explains in "Susan Sontag's 'New Left Pastoral,'" took the distinctly pastoral form of disengagement, withdrawal into oneself, repudiation of the dominant culture, and a return to a simpler life—in effect, an intensely psychological revolution whose philosophical forebears are classical literary dissidents like Thoreau, Emerson, Melville, Twain and Whitman. The hip-

pie and the dropout are in his view 20th-century manifestations of a venerable form of American activism, namely, a kind of radical nostalgia exemplified in musty shibboleths like "Back to the Garden" or "Back to Nature," as well as "Make Love, Not War."

But despite this often brilliant analysis, I see *The Pilot and the Passenger* as another example of the failure of literary criticism (deconstruction being perhaps the most egregious contemporary example) to make meaningful political statements. Marx ultimately fails, not only because he joins suit with the growing number of authors who would write the New Left into innocuous oblivion by denying the '60s any trace of *Realpolitik*.

In the '80s, the first thing you can expect even a writer as left-leaning as Marx to do when dealing with the student movement is to play down its political dimension and play up its psychological one. Psychologizing a political event, rummaging after motives—bourgeois dissatisfaction, tantrums against Mommy

and Daddy, the spoiled brat at war with his class—are widespread tactics for trivializing an event, denying it the status of a rational, purposeful action, and making it instead a personal fantasy fueled by all sorts of extra-political miseries and complexes.

The happy, quiescent hippie, as some of us in the '80s malignly misremember him, did not always shuffle about on Cloud Nine in a simpering, drug-induced stupor, a joint in one hand, a shepherd's crook in the other, as the whole demeaning concept of the pastoral would seem to suggest. By emphasizing the bucolic and psychological aspects of the movement—disengagement, internal revolution, withdrawal, dropping out—Marx unwittingly obliterates the visible and pragmatic aspects, the protests, the organization and, most importantly, the specific, concrete responses to specific, concrete circumstances. ■

Daniel Harris is literary editor of the *Boston Review*. His work has appeared in *The Nation* and *Book Forum*.

The Thin Blue Line
Directed by Errol Morris

By Pat Aufderheide

IT PROBABLY SHOULDN'T COME AS A surprise that documentaries are more interesting these days than most fiction work by independent filmmakers. What ordinary newspaper reader could deny that life is weirder than fiction.

Documentary form is now wide open to formal experiment and improbable subjects. That may be one of the side benefits of the erosion between public and private spheres, or evidence of a growing confusion between the imaginary and the real, which makes the filmmaker a practical philosopher of reality. In any case, the voice-of-God, just-the-facts documentary (think nature movies on public TV) now looks like a *form* rather than just a window to truth.

Current work builds on a solid foundation. America's greatest film achievement outside Hollywood may be in documentary, such as the work of the Maysles brothers and Fred Wiseman. When '60s kids picked up 16mm cameras, they first made documentaries with them. Such disparate work as *Atomic Cafe* and *Sherman's March* showcased new talent and sometimes even broke through the theatrical audience barrier.

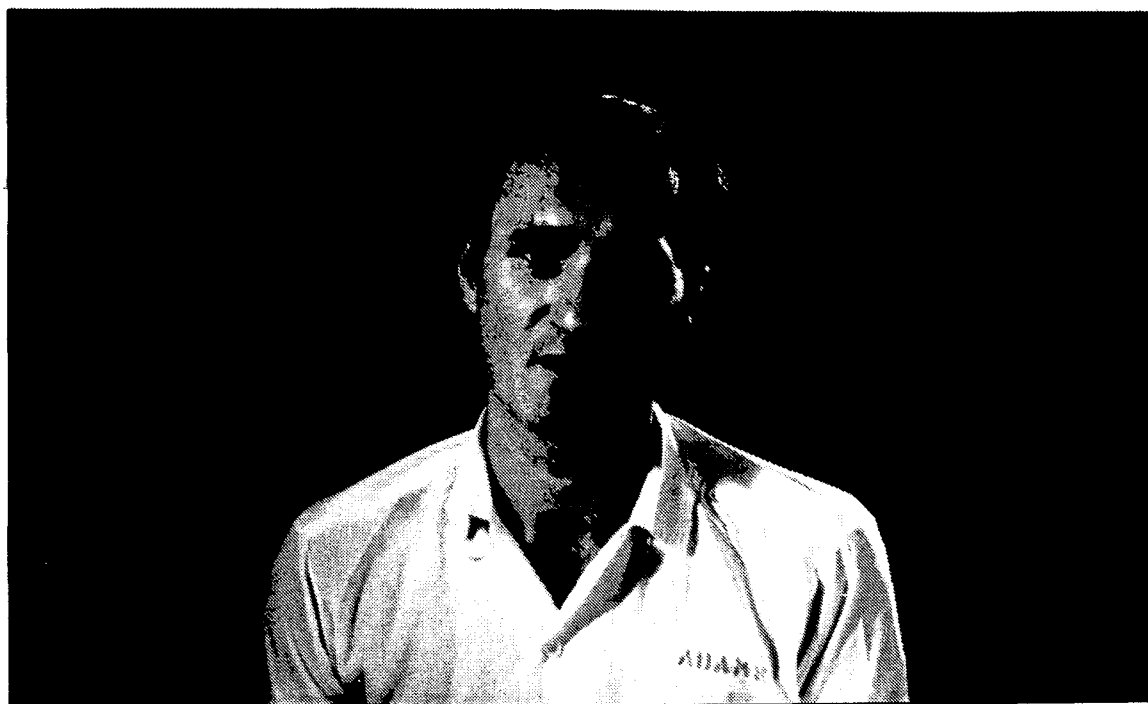
Bizarrely normal: No one could be more ready for success than filmmaker Errol Morris, whose newest work, *The Thin Blue Line* premiered in March at the San Francisco Film Festival. After its premiere there to packed houses, *The Thin Blue Line* became a must-see item for distributors, who are now bidding on the film. Following theatrical release, the film will be shown on public television's *American Playhouse* series.

Morris' earlier films, *Gates of Heaven* and *Vernon, Florida* became festival sensations and cult films for their cool record of the bizarre in the everyday. Critic Roger Ebert even put *Gates of Heaven*, about a pet cemetery and its clients, on his 10 best list, but neither of Morris' previous films found a large theatrical success.

The central feature of his earlier films is a deadpan interview, under lighting conditions that turn the subject into a homemade star, in which the person freely, often cheerfully offers something between a testimonial and a confession. At one level it's a grown-up version of "Kids Say the Darndest Things," at another it's a poignant document. His subjects live in idiosyncratic, passionately felt universes whose reality is tangential to that of their neighbors—or the viewer's.

The Thin Blue Line is like a horror movie made with the same kind of cast...and it's all true. It is the

Errol Morris: crossing the line at the scene of the crime



Blind justice or mere myopia?—David Harris (above) and Randall Adams on death row.

story of a man wrongly condemned for the murder of a police officer in Houston.

Morris had fund-raised unsuccessfully for six years for projects like a movie about spontaneous combustion, a man building his own superhighway in Northwest Minnesota and the whereabouts of Einstein's brain. He finally got public TV help to make a movie about a Texas psychiatrist, "Dr. Death," who regularly testifies that convicted murderers are dangerous enough to warrant the death penalty.

While researching this documentary (still unmade, but now in process), Morris interviewed death-row inmates and ran into a man whose story intrigued him. Pursuing the story with skills he'd learned while working as a criminal investigator, he turned his own investigation into an on-screen

drama.

Whodunnit plus: Like a detective, and in cinematic language that ironically invokes the sleazo gumshoe movie, the film follows testimony, offers repeated and slightly but crucially different re-enactments of the key moments, and observes evidence.

By the end you're convinced of Morris' case, that itinerant laborer Randall Adams is an innocent victim, and the real killer is the psychopathic youth David Harris, who picked him up when his car ran out of gas one Thanksgiving morning. You're also convinced that the state's three surprise witnesses lied in court, once they've contradicted or shadowed their testimony in front of Morris' camera.

An audio tape record of Morris' last interview with Harris, now on death row for a later crime he ad-

mitted to, ends the movie (Morris' camera broke down), and Morris asks Harris if Adams is innocent. Harris answers, "I'm sure he is...I'm the one that knows."

True believers: Although the film builds a terrifying case for a miscarriage of justice, that's not what makes *The Thin Blue Line* a great documentary. What does that is Morris' use of film to address the underlying question: how do we perceive reality and reconstruct it

***The Thin Blue Line* ironically invokes the cinematic language of sleazo gumshoe movies.**

to make sense to ourselves?

The people we meet in the film all think they're doing the right thing. And they each live in the solipsistic bubble that in Morris' earlier movies has its whimsy. Even here, audiences can't help laughing at the amazing things people say with flat self-confidence. But the life-and-death stakes give laughter a nervous tinge.

"All of my movies are solipsistic movies," Morris said over coffee the day after his film opened at the festival. "One of the very sad things about *Thin Blue Line* is that the solipsism in this particular case has a very unpleasant result. An innocent man comes within a week of being given a lethal injection, a killer is freed to kill again, and the prosecutor who is successful in getting this unlawful conviction goes on to bigger and better stuff.

"I think we all live in a surreal state, and I think this particular movie is an attempt for me to break out of it. I don't believe in the subjectivity of truth. There is a fact of the matter."

Still, the point of making the movie wasn't merely to show the facts. "All three of my films are essays about belief and reality," he said. "They're investigations into our relationship between the spoken word or image and the world around us. The intention throughout this movie is to play a grotesque true story against all these melodramatic conventions we're familiar with from other movies."

Truth, fiction and the truth of fictions: Every element of *The Thin Blue Line* is highly worked, to heighten the point not only that this is a movie, but that self-constructed movies are going on inside people's heads. The interviews are talking heads on a platform the size of a screen, Wizard of Oz heads on what Morris calls "an elevated forum for speech."

His interview style theatrically frames speech. "Ordinary people are performing there, in every sense of the word," he said. "The camera is obtrusive. They notice it." He avoids the zoom lens and clever cutting, "because it interferes—I wanted to create dioramas, much like you'd see in the Museum of Natural History."

The effect is verbal self-portraiture, often devastating to the subjects' credibility but also revealing of their characters and the course of events. The police officer who complacently says Harris' deposition fit with "what we *knew*" helps to explain the prejudging of Adams. Witness Emily Miller, who belatedly came forward (just when her daughter was in need of some judicial favors) to testify she'd seen someone like Adams in the murder car, blithely says she likes to play detective, and imagines herself as a character in one of her favorite detective shows from childhood. As she describes it, the real-life Adams case

was a script waiting for her to step into.

The film also uses snippets from TV shows like *Boston Blackie*, which Miller remembered, and from *Dillinger*, whose history was important to the judge. The clips underscore the way that, as Morris puts it, "we're all trying to construct and reconstruct the world in a way that makes it make sense."

Repeated re-enactment of the murder and its aftermath—looking spookily like night scenes from the thriller *Blood Simple*—also contributes to that understanding. The versions are slightly different, each corresponding to someone's testimony, and are visual shards of conflicting memories and fantasies. Music by Philip Glass, rendering with upscale gloss clichéd themes of suspense and danger, works ironically. The music acts as a constant reminder

of the melodramatic conventions going on inside the minds of the different players in this real-life drama.

Bad and evil: For a man obsessed with private realities, Morris is also intensely concerned with public ethics. "I think often about who the truly evil characters in this movie are," he said. "David Harris is not a nice person, but he was essentially doing what psychokillers do. He was killing people. On the other hand, the prosecutor was not doing what prosecutors are supposed to do, which is to free the innocent and punish the guilty."

The case against Randall Adams was locked in place at the trial with the prosecutor's emotional use of the phrase "the thin blue line," referring to the job of police to keep society from anarchy. But Morris also believes in a "thin blue line," one made up of rules of evidence and

judicial procedure. "Without those rules, we just live in a zoo, a jungle," he said. "I do believe there are people who should know better. It takes a certain amount of intellectual discipline to find out about the world."

Morris, who practices such discipline, has become a self-confessed advocate for Adams. He has submitted his hard-won evidence and testified to urge for a new trial. However, the judge, rather than acting either way, has merely let the case, like Randall Adams, sit in limbo. Morris hopes public outcry will put pressure on the Texas courts.

Beyond issues: But he also doesn't want the film shrunk down to the size of "an issue film." In fact, his dream for documentary is to be about "nothing at all." He means that a documentary would be important not for its subject matter but for its exploration of the way we perceive

and misunderstand our common world. Barely below the surface of its crime-and-punishment drama, *The Thin Blue Line* is concerned with those deeper questions of knowledge, action and responsibility.

Morris, like his movie, is haunted by the central horror to which the many interview subjects' various perspectives all point: "What did Randall Adams do to deserve this? Nothing, absolutely nothing. That's the primitive terror at the center of this whole movie."

"We'd like to think that everything happens for a reason. But the world does not make sense. People try to make it make sense—even Randall Adams talks about destiny. That's his solution to the possibility of a much more terrible explanation, that it didn't happen for any reason at all."

The battle against meaninglessness makes what people believe far

more powerful than what they perceive. The link between worlds of belief and the real world of action and consequences is the line *The Thin Blue Line* walks. Morris' wake-up call from solipsism focuses on the building of private belief, not to rediscover the grotesque in the ordinary, but to critically frame that process for the viewer.

That is a job that Morris thinks isn't limited to documentary, until now his formal option. Having written several scripts for major film producers, he is now working on a fiction feature, also about a criminal trial. He isn't worried about the transition, because "at least I won't have to constantly fight people to get them on film and make sure what they're saying is of interest. Anyway, it can't be harder than what I've been doing already."

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The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On

Directed by Kazuo Hara

Editor's note: International as well as U.S. documentaries created waves at the San Francisco Film Festival, which prides itself on introducing audiences to the innovative and challenging in global film. Perhaps most sensational was the Japanese documentary *The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On*, which had already become front-page news in Japan, had won a prize at the Berlin Film Festival and been a high point of both the Hawaii Film Festival and New York's New Directors/New Films series.

Both its subject matter and its style boldly confront expectations. "I didn't make this movie to illustrate theories," director Kazuo Hara said at the festival, flailing his arms. "I did it to make a movie that was more dramatic than fiction!" With his central character, Kenzo Okuzaki, he certainly succeeded. Hara also made a movie that probes the moral health of Japanese society and questions the role of its media.

Okuzaki is one of a hundred survivors of his 1,300-man Japanese Army regiment in New Guinea during World War II. A man with a personal history of violence and vengeance, he has taken it as his mission to discover the truth behind rumors of cannibalism during that campaign, and to demand (a taboo thought in Japan) that the emperor take the ultimate responsibility for war crimes. In today's affluent Japan, this is turning over carefully-placed rocks, and in his frustration, he has also taken to throwing them.

Hara, whose earlier documentaries were also controversial, and who has worked with noted feature director Shohei Imamura, decided to accompany Okuzaki, who was passionately investigating military executions of two soldiers in New Guinea after the war ended—possibly so that they could be eaten by the survivors. The crew filmed Okuzaki's sometimes violent encounters without intervening, in order to capture the

Hara's controversial portrait of a fanatic

moment of rupture with the normal and thus expose the terms of normality. As Okuzaki ruthlessly questions and even assaults his targets, and as his suspicions are gradually confirmed, the narration-less film forces the viewer into uneasy complicity with the camera's crew, and into the same moral dilemmas the crew faced.

Hara, building on his international festival reception, is now negotiating with U.S. distributors. But his propensity to step on toes and taboos has not necessarily endeared him to the Japanese film industry, as Tokyo-based reporter Carol Lutfy explains in a view from Japan of this remarkable documentary.

By Carol Lutfy

KAZUO HARA'S *THE EMPEROR'S NAKED ARMY MARCHES ON* has been hailed in Japan as the most important film in years. Forty-two-year-old director Kazuo Hara, named Most Promising New Director by the Director's Guild of Japan for the film, has been praised for his tenacity in making it.

That is partly because the Japanese emperor, unlike British royalty, who are fair game for gossip and the tabloid press, is not a subject for public scrutiny. He lives in strict seclusion, with little revealed about him beyond his health

FILM

and hobbies.

Revered as a god until the end of World War II, the emperor symbolized the purity and superiority of the Japanese race, and troops were prepared to fight to the death to protect him. Such loyalty was unusually extreme in New Guinea, where neither lack of food and water nor grueling, sometimes one-on-one fighting deterred the army. Some soldiers refused to scar the emperor's name with defeat by returning, and reluctantly repatriated as late as the '70s.

Cinema venom: Kenzo Okuzaki's commitment to finding out the truth about the New Guinea murders is a metaphor for his

blinding obsession with Emperor Hirohito. Okuzaki claims that the emperor has never apologized or taken responsibility for the suffering the war imposed on Japan.

"At first I was intimidated about undertaking the project," explained Hara, who searched for six months before finding a theater that would run the film. "But the more frightened I got, the more determined I got. In order to be meaningful, films have to have a sort of poison in them—something that upsets the accepted order of things, something that gets people thinking."

"I wanted to address what it's like for the soldiers who experienced the horrors of the war to be living in a society that has all but forgotten about it," he continued. "In that sense, it's as much a film about the present as it is about the past."

Okuzaki, even before Hara's film, had been received sympathetically by the Japanese despite a remarkably violent personal history. He served 10 years in prison for killing a real estate agent in 1956, and over years of solitary confinement became obsessed with the question of guilt and responsibility for war crimes. In 1969 he was imprisoned for catapulting four pachinko balls at the emperor. After his release, he scattered pornographic handbills, doctored with the heads of the imperial family, from a Tokyo skyscraper. He has since been accused of plotting to murder former prime minister Kauei Tanaka.

"He's a fanatic, but he's a product of the fanatical age we live in," Hara said. "There's at least a morsel of truth in everything he says, so it's not difficult to feel sympathy for him."

Still, the film's success in Japan has surprised even Hara. Its months-long engagement at a Tokyo theater set a record last year. The emperor's illness made the film particularly timely: even so its broad appeal was unsuspected. The status of the emperor, the implied war crimes, the incessant questioning of authority—all taboo

in Japan—have traditionally been of little interest to filmgoers and filmmakers.

Some Japanese critics suggest that these themes still elicit little interest. Hara explained that his own interest in the project lay not in Okuzaki's message but his character: "He's an unusual person in Japanese society. He says exactly what he believes."

"The film's popularity has nothing to do with Okuzaki's ideology; it has to do with his actions," said Narumi Yoshida, editor-in-chief of film magazine *Kinema Junpo*. "Japan's young people are peaceful on the exterior, but they identify with the extreme."

Shooting schedule: In the film, Okuzaki lies outright to his interviewees in order to get information. He physically attacks them when they object to his questions. When his ex-commander Koshimizu fails to cooperate, Okuzaki shoots Koshimizu's son. Okuzaki, having carefully premeditated the shooting, urged Hara to film it.

That Hara and his crew stood by while Okuzaki attacked his subjects has raised more than a few eyebrows here. That he did nothing to prevent the shooting of Koshimizu's son has raised the difficult question: where does commitment to the story end and moral responsibility begin?

Hara answers in pragmatic terms: "Once Okuzaki has it in his mind to do something, there's no stopping him," he said. "Had I protested I would have only fueled the fire."

The film's success abroad will not necessarily enhance Hara's career at home. "For showing Japan's shame abroad, the pressures on him are going to mount, and eventually he may find himself alienated," said film critic Donald Richie. Such a scenario is not without precedent. Japanese film directors Akira Kurosawa and Nagisa Oshima are unable to fund their films in Japan despite continued success abroad, Richie said. "It's the idea of doing something different, of standing out, that's not accepted."

IN THESE TIMES APRIL 20-26, 1988 21

The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On: truth is stranger.



The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On

Congress

Continued from page 7

tenberg warned that if Jackson were nominated, the Democrats could lose the House. Other Democrats fear that if Jackson is denied a place on the ticket, many black voters will sit out the election—also spelling doom for Democratic candidates.

If Jackson is on the ticket, either as president or vice president, marginal House and Senate races will be affected. The Democrats would probably lose close elections in the South, just as they did in 1984, but it is extremely unlikely that they could lose the House itself. A Dukakis-Jackson ticket, for instance, might aid some Northern Democrats like Tom Ward who is again challenging South Bend, Ind., incumbent Rep. John Hiler.

ANC

Continued from page 11

had asked for police protection. In vain.

Security minister and national police boss Robert Pandraud flatly denied ever having received "a request for protection in favor of that person." The South African context was clear everywhere—except, it seemed, in France, the European country with the strongest lobby openly sympathizing with white South Africa.

Pretoria, as is usual in such cases, denied responsibility and suggested that Dulcie September was a victim of "factional fighting" inside the ANC. Magnus Malan's line is that "there is no difference between the ANC and any other Soviet-inspired terrorist organization." When "terrorists" are killed, they have naturally been killed by other "terrorists."

The Democrats' concern about Jackson, however, has temporarily overshadowed the potential problem that Dukakis' candidacy could create. If Dukakis, like Mondale in 1984 and George McGovern in 1972, were to pick a Northern or Western liberal running mate, he might improve the chances of some Democrats like Humphrey in Minnesota or Rhode Island Lt. Gov. Richard Licht. But such a ticket could hurt the chances of Southern Democrats, including Dowdy.

Overall, Democratic congressional candidates would probably be best off if Dukakis, with Jackson's blessing, chose a moderate white Southerner as his running mate. Under this scenario, Democrats might lose to George Bush in November, but they would likely gain strong majorities in the House and Senate. □

Terrorists are like that.

This sinister line found highly placed echoes in France. Police boss Pandraud himself insinuated that the victim was a "terrorist" killed by rival members of her own anti-apartheid movement. "Various factions of terrorists should not settle their scores on our territory," he said, adding: "We will not be the terrorists' sanctuary." This was a hint that the murder might be used as a pretext to shut down the ANC and South-West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) offices—which is exactly what Pretoria wants.

Socialist Party leader Lionel Jospin criticized Pandraud for echoing the South African line. Noting that the South African government is currently assassinating ANC leaders all over the world, Jospin said that "the least we could do would be to recall our ambassador" to Pretoria.

But Dulcie September fell in the final weeks of a French presidential election campaign that Socialist incumbent François Mitterrand expects to win by stressing his ability to "unify the French," that is, by smoothing over traditional distinctions between right and left. The last thing he needs is a dramatic polarization between right and left.

"Blood on their hands": South Africa has enough friends in the French right to make it a very polarizing issue. Mitterrand's statement was vague. The president situated the assassination in "a series of criminal actions tending to settle by violence a situation whose origin is found in apartheid" and promised to "make the necessary representations to the embassy" of South Africa. Despite calls from the left, there was no break in relations, no recall of the French ambassador, not even a token expulsion of a military attaché.

It was only after Mitterrand's election in 1981 that the ANC was first allowed to open an office in France. The ANC office in Paris got financial support from the French Socialist Party and active political support from the French Communist Party (PCF), but the anti-apartheid movement remained relatively weak in France, where it could not find the strong church support it gets in Britain or West Germany.

If Mitterrand wants to avoid polarization, the PCF needs it to revitalize its dwindling troops. PCF general secretary Georges Marchais called for a diplomatic break with South Africa. "For years French leaders have refused to take sanctions against the Pretoria regime," he said. "That intolerable complicity has been understood by the men of apartheid for what it is: an encouragement. Those responsible, the president and the prime minister, have September's blood on their hands." □

The PCF's accusation that Mitterrand had "blood on his hands" was part of an all-out and successful effort to take over September's martyrdom for the party's own uses. It ruled out cooperation with anti-apartheid Socialist leaders.

Meanwhile, the government's ho-hum attitude came under attack from the liberal press, which discovered a paid propagandist for the apartheid regime right in the offices of Interior Minister Charles Pasqua, Pandraud's boss. This was Jean Taousson, a veteran of the "Secret Army Organization" (OAS) that waged terrorist war against Charles de Gaulle's government in the early '60s when it became clear that de Gaulle was ready to grant Algeria independence. OAS veterans have since swelled the ranks of mercenary bands and death squads all over the world, especially in Latin America and Africa.

Taousson, it was reported, was put in charge of "missions" by Pasqua, including looking after repatriated white settlers from French colonies and "Harkis," Algerians who fought on the French side. These are population groups where South African secret services recruit mercenaries for various unmentionable tasks. Taousson puts out a discreet South Africa propaganda bulletin aimed at members of France's Parliament and business community. He reportedly compiled lists of "subversive" organizations in Paris for South African secret services, including a precise description of the unmarked location of the modest ANC office where September was assassinated.

Reacting to these revelations and to complaints of inaction, police arrested half a dozen people, then let them go for lack of any evidence, but not until "unidentified sources" near the Interior Ministry fed rumors to journalists that one of the suspects was a Communist sympathizer. South Africa's friendly disinformation specialists hinted that Communist terrorists had murdered September for ideological differences, or selling out to South Africa or merely for being ineffective.

The PCF and ANC worked together last summer after French aid volunteer Pierre-André Albertini was charged by South Africa with transporting arms and money for the ANC and sentenced to four years imprisonment in the bantustan of Ciskei for refusing to testify against his friends. Albertini's parents were PCF members, and the PCF made the campaign to free Albertini its major activity, but with little impact outside the Communist family. Albertini was released last September as part of an exchange of prisoners between South Africa and Angola.

The friends of South Africa have been much more visible in recent years in France than the adversaries of apartheid. The mayor of Nice, Jacques Médecin, has twinned his Riviera city with Cape Town and is an unabashed admirer of "the fantastic successes of the white race" in South Africa. Another prominent right-wing politician, Philippe Malaud, suggested during Albertini's imprisonment that "France should apologize for sending as an aid worker a communist who became an accomplice of terrorists."

And last July nine members of the French Parliament, representing the two mainstream conservative parties as well as the National Front, came back from a visit to South Africa announcing that "apartheid was abolished" and that they had observed "no discrimination" between the races. Such perceptions are not unrelated to the large volume of business dealings between the two

countries, including arms sales and nuclear technology transfer.

Dulcie September's murder should have united the left against this large, rich and dangerous South Africa lobby. On the contrary, the drama revealed the left's weakness and division.

SWAPO's representative in France, Eddy Amkongo, said he had "never been so shocked, so terrified" as when he learned that his friend Dulcie had been murdered. The PCF immediately moved in and supplied bodyguards and safe offices for the frightened ANC and SWAPO people. This allowed the PCF to decide who could honor Dulcie's memory.

Sectarianism: There are two institutions in France that put on good funerals: the Catholic Church and the PCF. Funeral production may be the last activity of religions when faith is gone.

The PCF put on a fine funeral for September at Père Lachaise cemetery, making sure that no political rivals intervened. Her associates had wanted representatives of the ANC, the family and one of the Front Line states to speak at the funeral. The PCF imposed its secretary-general, Georges Marchais. The ANC wanted to balance Marchais with Jospin. The PCF said no, and the Socialists did not insist. Only September's brother-in-law, speaking in English, managed to introduce a heavy dose of Christian brotherly love, to the consternation of the French translator, better equipped to deal with the vocabulary of militant struggle than of Paul's Epistle to the Romans.

In denouncing apartheid, French Communists stressed that South Africa is today's Nazism. To keep their failing party together, PCF leaders find it useful to plunge back into an atmosphere that recalls the heroic period of the French Resistance and makes the Communist Party seem the only recourse against powerful enemies.

The PCF later justified excluding the Socialists by claiming that the criterion was the demand to break relations with Pretoria. However, other left leaders calling for a break in relations, such as Pierre Juquin and the leader of the anti-racist association "SOS-Racism," Harlem Désir, were also excluded. PCF guards physically blocked an SOS-Racism delegation from approaching the casket with its funeral wreath.

This sectarianism was a grave disservice to the ANC, increasing its dangerous isolation just when it needs the broadest possible support as protection from South African death squads. Marchais is often called "the grave-digger of the French left" and he never deserved the title more than on this occasion.

In a guest column in *Le Monde*, exiled South African poet Breyten Breytenbach called on France to break relations with Pretoria to "ward off the danger of moral contamination" represented by apartheid and the acceptance as normal of that aggressive racist aberration.

Breytenbach noted that in West Germany, reflection on the question of European relations to Africa and apartheid "is much more advanced than it is here, the positive commitment to the resistance is much more concrete. And yet Germany is not an 'African' power. The positions taken by the governments and peoples of the 'little countries' of Europe, Holland and the Scandinavian countries, also provide us with fine examples of political courage."

The trouble is precisely that France still enjoys being an "African" power. □

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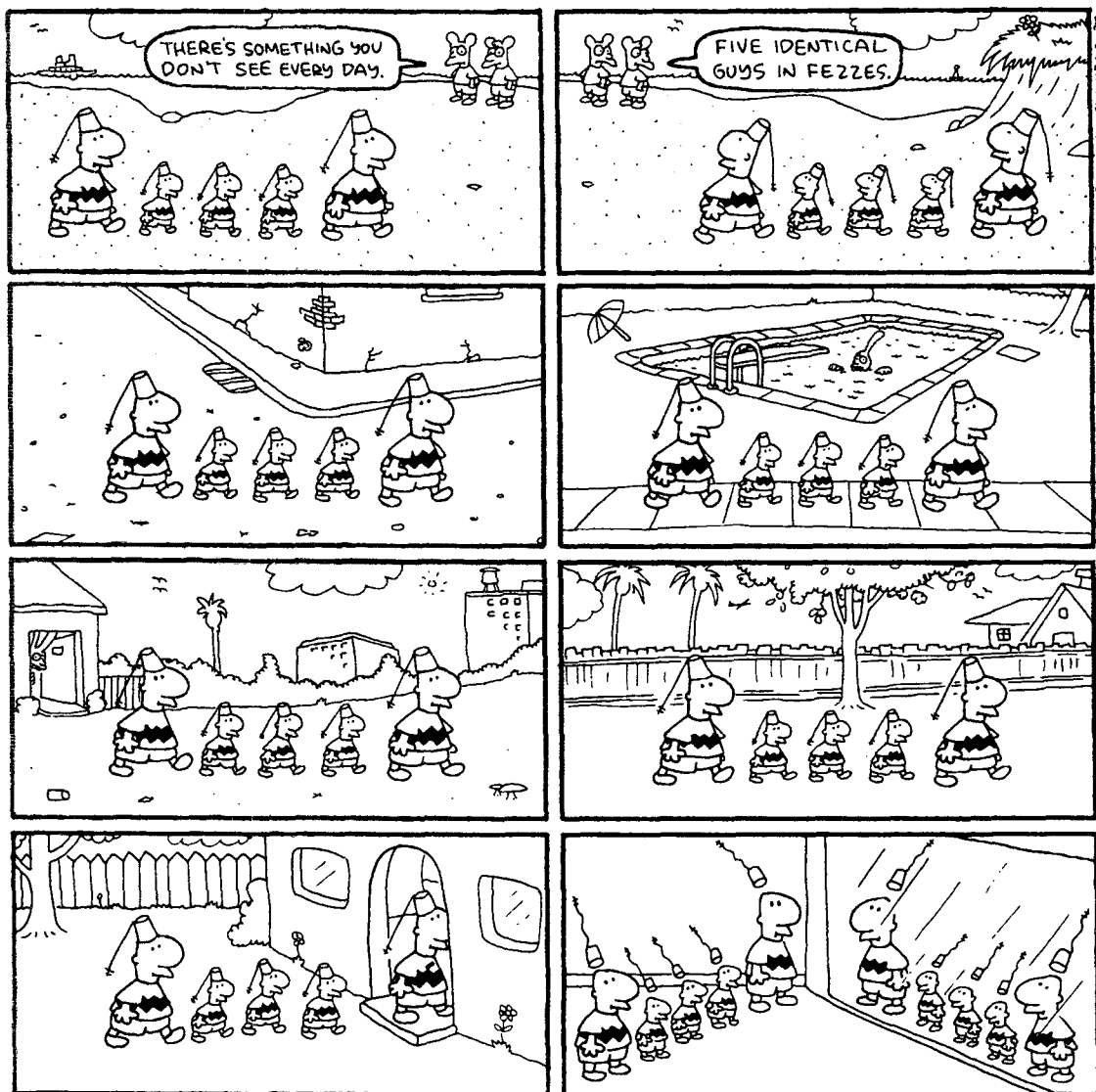
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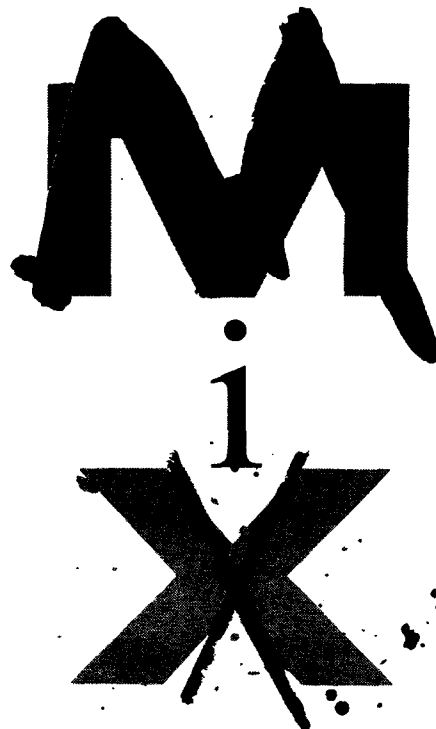
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By Darcy DeMarco

FROM THE MOMENT THAT JUDITH CASSELBERRY and Jaque Dupré of Casselberry-Dupré take the stage, even newcomers to their show know that something special is about to happen. And it does. As soon as they launch into Dory Previn's "Did Jesus Have a Baby Sister?" people are on their feet, dancing and swaying in the aisles. In minutes, these two black women dressed in traditional African garments and armed only with a rhythm guitar, a gourd instrument called a guiro, and two powerful voices, have done what many performers are unable to do with electric guitars, laser shows, backup singers and video screens: give the audience music that moves their feet, their minds and their hearts.

Drawn together in their teens through a shared interest in music and social-political ideas, Casselberry and Dupré have been working ever since to prove that popular, danceable music needn't be synonymous with meaningless lyrics or limited to three electronically programmed sounds. Drawing upon diverse musical backgrounds and their own personal experiences, they have created a constantly evolving sound that shows that boogie and brains can go hand in hand.

Although the duo initially shared a common interest in folk music, each has her own musical background. "I grew up in the church," Dupré recalls, "listening to gospel and spirituals. I also listened to Claire Wood, the Staples Singers, Mahalia Jackson and James Cleveland. When I became interested in folk music, I listened to Odetta and Miriam Makeba." She was also influenced by Caribbean music, such as calypso.

Casselberry says she grew up listening to contemporary black music, such as "big band jazz, Duke Ellington, Ella Fitzgerald, Nancy Wilson and Sarah Vaughan. I also

enjoyed classical music. My older sister introduced me to Aretha Franklin."

Musical communication: When they met as students at Brooklyn's Erasmus High School in 1967, Dupré was the featured soloist in her church choir and considered somewhat of a ham. By this time, she had found that singing was the most fulfilling and rewarding thing in her life. Casselberry, on the other hand, had sung in church choirs, but had never gone solo.

Although they performed together in high school and immediately afterward with the New York Free Theater and at various colleges, much of their work was with other bands. It was not until 1979 that they decided to direct their energies into the duo.

"When you work with someone and you can communicate with them musically on different levels, you try to hang onto that," Casselberry explains. The communication often includes percussionist Annette A. Aguilar and guitarist/bassist Toshi Reagon, who have performed with them for the past two years. "We started working with Annette seven or eight years ago," says Casselberry, "and with Toshi three or four years ago. Annette plays Afro-Brazilian, Afro-Cuban and classical percussion, while Toshi plays lead and rhythm guitar, folk, R&B and blues. We made the decision for that sound on the album, so now they tour with us."

That sound is a rich blend of reggae, soul, folk, African, gospel and jazz sounds (to name a few) that can be heard in every song. "The sound can be anything," says Dupré. "Our influence of who we are as Afro-American women comes through in the sound. We remain as traditional as we want to, and as contemporary as we want. The blues can bleed into the country and it's fine."

Subconscious politics: Casselberry says that they choose songs that they can feel, or that have a message they identify with.

If the lyrics of a particular song appeal to them, but the music doesn't, they will rearrange the song so that the music will have as strong an impact as the words.

While their material has always been political, Casselberry says that they never consciously decided to do political songs. As black women growing up in New York in the '60s, both she and Dupré had absorbed the tenets of social consciousness. "I'm sure it conceptualized in our subconscious," says Dupré. "Maturing during the Civil Rights movement, with the sit-ins, church songs in that role became political." Casselberry agrees. "The church in Afro-American culture has always been where we could say what was going on. We've always communicated with each other through music. A lot of people today don't know the real meaning of the old field songs, the old spirituals."

Despite the political vacuity of the mainstream culture in the past decade, Casselberry-Dupré has continued to gain popularity with both critics and the public. Their 1986 album, *City Down*, was chosen as a "Best of" by the *Boston Globe*, the *Los Angeles Times* and Tower Records' *Pulse Magazine*. The National Association of Independent Record Dealers chose it as the Reggae Album of the Year. And performances at the Michigan Womyn's Festival and Sisterfire, and at theaters and clubs nationwide, have drawn standing ovations from an increasingly mixed audience of women and men of all races.

Although their albums can often be found in the "women's music" bin at record stores, Dupré says that they do not want their music to be categorized. "We don't like to be pegged into one type of music or sound," she says. "For a long time, we have done a crossover of different music that we like. We are not inhibited in what we can and cannot do."

"We are always aware of our audience," she continues. "We try to be sure that

everyone has been included. We want to keep that as a reality." Choosing material ranging from Bob Marley's "Positive Vibration" to the Eagles' "Take It to the Limit" to Yoruban spiritual invocations, and infusing it with a voice straight from the heart and soul keeps the duo from getting pegged into a specific genre.

"Our message," explains Casselberry, "is not really political, but personal and social: not buying what we [Afro-Americans] have been told about who we are as a people. We have an open message for everyone. We can talk about human rights, AIDS, across the board; we can play a women's festival and then play at Croton-on-the-Hudson, and the message is the same."

Fame and content: Both women believe that they can become well-known without compromising the message or content of their material. "I remember the first time I realized there was an audience for this kind of music," Dupré says. "I'd been to concerts—Mahalia Jackson, Joan Baez, Peter, Paul and Mary—and many people tried to give the impression that political music was just a passing thing. Then, in California, J. Casselberry took me to see Sweet Honey in the Rock, and they were singing these songs...and I realized that, yes, there is an audience, and that women can sing the [political] music too."

Although the Casselberry-Dupré message is for everyone, the duo does have a special commitment to people of color. "We also have to talk about the black issues, and they're not the dominant issues in the white women's music scene," explains Casselberry. "They're not a priority. I can't expect the women's music industry to want to hear reggae or gospel, or to want to hear about South Africa."

While the prospect of being a political black female duo in a notoriously sexist, white-male dominated music industry might seem daunting to some, both women say they have encountered few obstacles in their path. "I was always encouraged to use my head and my heart and to go for it," Casselberry says, recalling her childhood. This spirit led the women to move to Boston two years ago to attend the Berklee College of Music. While Dupré is studying songwriting and vocal techniques, Casselberry has decided to focus on recording.

Though they acknowledge the challenges before them, Casselberry and Dupré are optimistic about attaining their goals. "We plan to continue to perform, and to put out another album (tentatively to be released this spring). We also want to do some videos and children's records, and there's a filmmaker interested in doing a full-length film with us," Casselberry says. "And I want to produce 'Jaque Dupré, Great Gospel Songster.'" A long-term aspiration is to travel the world in search of music from different cultures. "We want to hear the real music, and not listen to the convoluted, watered-down versions we get here," Casselberry says.

She continues, "There are two kinds of music: good and bad. People like to hear all kinds of stuff. This idea that people only want to hear a certain thing comes from radio programmers and marketing people. The role of the artist in society is to be on the cutting edge," Casselberry says. "What the artists are doing reflects the cultural direction. It is important to resist falling into a mold."

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